

Mount

Vernon



Fall 1955

Miscellany

James Watson

Feb 1852

Mrs. C. C. Barry

Go!

Empty, plain, no use to cry.
Above, alone, way up high?
Johnny, Alice, their eyes cast down,
Or straight, but never aside.

Lament it? Why?
Pursue or die.
A weekly wage? Not I?
But what? Who cares?

And so it goes,
The old ball bounces high,
I like Ike, too;
Win with Dewey and who?

Believe it or not by --
It must be so.
I'll take three, please
They'll be around.

Seek and ye shall probably --
Turn up your coat collar, dear.
Remember; is winter here?
Good thing I don't care for beer.

Henry Riecks

Get

Empty, plain, no use to cry.
Above, alone, way up high?
Johnny, Alice, their eyes cast down,
Or straight, but never aside.

Lament thy way?

Paras or die.

A weekly wage? Not it?

But what? Who cares?

And so it goes.

The old ball bounces high.

I like like, too?

Win with Dewey and what?

Believe it or not by --

It must be so.

I'll take three, please

They'll be around.

Back and ye shall probably --

Turn up your coat collar, dear.

Remember? Is winter here?

Good thing I don't care for beer.

Henry Hicks

The Myrmechy

The first one came a few weeks earlier than the others, but time meant nothing to such as these. There was work to be done, and the way to do it had already been planned, spoken, ordered. Only workers were there, creatures without thought of changing the way, who could not change the way. It was so ordered.

They had to build. To keep life, to go on without end, changeless, they had to build. The place was already spoken. The plan called for a dwelling place, big, and nurseries to keep the race unfailing, and places for storage so none would starve, and fields to grow the food. They had to work.

This was a branch of the greater, living body, but it had to work unhelped. In the great plan, each part must keep itself, and feed itself, while always a part of the whole, changeless.

This part was new, young while old, and food was scarce. Some did not eat. They worked until death, building, and others ate to keep the race. At last, more workers came, and the work went faster.

Slowly the great dwelling takes shape. There are long halls, many rooms, and many more to come. The fields are first, and there is but one food. It is the best for workers, and each gets a share, as much as he needs to work, and no more. The nurseries come next. A new body to take the place of each fallen one, even a few more, for the need of workers grows.

Each new body is taught. Teaching is a wonderful thing, and must not be forgotten. Each worker is taught what should be known; how to fill the place of a fallen one, how to fulfill a duty that must be done. Too much teaching is bad. No one must know more than is needed to fulfill the great plan.

Each worker is given a task, and never changes. Some grow the food, some gather it. Some tend the young in the rooms called nurseries, there are some to do each task. Nothing is forgotten.

There can be no rest. Work must go on. No one needs rest being taught that it is against the plan.

Wait. At last in all this work there seems to be a gap. Some new ones are brought from the nurseries. They eat more than the others. They are taught something different. No, these, too, fit the plan. They will start new branches. They are taught to lead others in fulfilling the plan. They rest now, but soon they will work.

Why is no one unhappy? Everyone must always work, go on without stopping... building, fulfilling. Teaching. That is it. No one knows otherwise. For as long as anyone remembers it has been the same. The ants have never wanted to change.

Kenneth E. Bunting

The first one came a few weeks earlier than the others, but time meant nothing to such as these. There was work to be done, and the way to do it had already been planned, spoken, ordered. Only workers were there, creatures without thought of changing the way, who could not change the way. It was so ordered.

They had to build. To keep life, to go on without end, unchanged, they had to build. The plan was already spoken. The plan called for a dwelling place, big, and nurseries to keep the race multiplying, and places for storage so none would starve, and fields to grow the food. They had to work. This was a branch of the greater, living body, but it had to work unhelped. In the great plan, each part must keep itself, and feed itself, while always a part of the whole, unchanged.

This part was new, young while old, and food was scarce. Some did not eat. They worked until death, building, and others ate to keep the race. At last, more workers came, and the work went faster.

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Words

The lash of words
Strikes hard
And leaves the weak
Fumbling blindly about
In a world of hurt repose.
A pain, mingled with fear
Of yet unspoken words.
One shrinking to escape
Not reality
But a brutal force of injury.
A power not of physical consequence
Yet a power far more effective;
The Power of Words!
The power of words
Cannot reach and wound
The stronger individual
And make his shrink
And bow with humble ignorance,
For he shall stand
And gently shed
With understanding mind
The words of foolish beings
Who fail to contemplate
The many things they say.
Be strong -- my friend
And let the others stand in awe
Of all you say and do.

Words

The lash of words
Strikes hard
And leaves the weak
Fumbling blindly about
In a world of hurt repose.
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Be strong -- my friend
And let the others stand in awe
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Be kind and oh!
So very tolerant
And in your extra moments
Work industriously
At some worthwhile task.
And in time your friends
Shall prove themselves
And yourself with them
 Shall be proud.
My friend, I too
Shall not let you down
But I expect high things of you.

Penny Harnel

Learned names

And I expect this is the first time

that you have seen me

in the city

and I am glad

to hear from you

and I hope you are well

and I hope you are happy

and I hope you are healthy

and I hope you are successful

and I hope you are content

and I hope you are loved

and I hope you are happy

Wistful Sea

Her sky blue eyes will hold no more
the vision of a sand swept shore
the tossing of a foam topped sea
that leaps and falls in childish glee.
Her soft red lips forever still
will stir no more to speak her will
of towering castles by the sea
and a life of idle luxury.
Her hopes, her dreams, her fond desires
all doomed with her in Satan's fires
where lust and greed are made no more
and sin's sweet dream swings closed its door
on the petty stones of life's vast shore
where on deaf ears the waters roar.

James Fowlke

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James Fowler

Benny Said

"Yeah," Benny said, smoothing the crease in his immaculate gabardine slacks, "yeah, I was always good for a buck. I'd say, 'Lets eat.' But maybe somebody'd say, 'I'm broke.' So what's the difference? I got money. Nobody's going to go hungrey cause he ain't got a buck.

"See? That's what I mean. When you got something, and maybe he ain't, why, you all go get a cup of coffee. And maybe later on you see him when you ain't got nothing, see? Then if he walks right past you, he ain't hurting you. He ain't hurting nobody but himself."

Benny scratched his long, hooked nose. "It was always like that when I worked down at the yard. I always had a buck, and a car, and nice clothes, and a new hat. I always had a new hat. And if I was walking along the street, and maybe the wind comes along and blows it off, and it lands in the gutter, see? And maybe there's a spot on it. And somebody picks it up and hands it to me, but I say, 'Throw it out.' It's dirty. There's a spot on it, so I don't want it. I'll go buy another one, cause I got something coming in all the time.

"I ain't got nothing much coming in now," Benny said, "and my wife takes everything she can, but I give her everything, just to get her out of my hair. See, I don't work at the yard no more. I got hurt back in forty-nine, so they retire me, and I don't work no more." He ran his fingers through his well combed, thin grey hair. "I got hurt, so they put me on a pension. But I'd be doing good, if my wife didn't take it all. But she can have her alimony. I live with my sister, and she don't give me no pain. I can still make a buck. I don't care. If all the guys I used to know don't seem to be around much these days, I figure, I'm not out nothing. I don't care about them either. They're out something, not me. I got something."

He sat down on a bench, pulling up his trousers in order to preserve the crease. Benny said, "I don't need money no more. If I go over to see the girl, and all I got is some bologna, and I say, 'All I got is some bologna,' she says, 'What do you mean, "all"? We don't need no more. Here's some bread and some mustard. We can have bologna sandwiches.'

"She's happy, see? It don't take no more than that to make her happy. She says, 'Poppy,' (she always calls me Poppy) 'Poppy, we got enough. We don't need no more.' See, she's not like my wife was. My wife was always screaming at me about something. She didn't like my friends, or I spent too much on clothes, or something. She was always looking for what she could get, see? But now she ain't got nothing. She wants me back, but I ain't going, cause she's always looking for something, but she winds up with nothing.

Benny Said

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mensurable cardboard slacks. "Yeah, I was always good for a
buck. I'd say, 'Let's see.' But maybe somebody'd say,
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Nobody's going to go hungry cause he ain't got a buck.
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Here's some bread and some butter. We can have belongings
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nothing."

"Now, my girl, she ain't like that. She lives near my sister, so I go around when I feel like it, and she's always glad to see me. I come in, and she says, 'Poppy, it's good to see you. Come on in, and we 'll put on the radio and have some coffee.' Then she makes me coffee, and we just sit and talk, and maybe play checkers a little bit. We're happy."

Benny blew the dust off the starched cuff of his sport shirt. He said, "She's a sick girl, now. She's sick lost of the time, but her place is clean. She manages to keep her apartment clean, cause I like clean things. When I worked down at the yard, everything was clean. And if something wasn't right, like the door on the men's room, or something, I'd tell them, and they'd fix it. And you could eat off the floor anywhere down there. My girl's like that. When I want something, some little thing, like a button sewed on my shirt, she does it."

"Like when I went to work a couple weeks ago. I worked out at the amusement park a couple days. Easy work, outside in the fresh air, and at the end of the week, I had a buck in my pocket, so I could get her something. See, I had something, and I didn't owe no one nothing, so I could get me a new pair of pants, and I could get her something, too."

"So I was working. And when I went off, she says, 'Here, Poppy. Here's a thermos with coffee in it. And here's some sandwiches.' So when I felt like drinking something, I had some coffee there, and I had some lunch. My wife never did nothing like that for me, nobody never did."

"But my girl's a good girl. She's got a couple boys, too, from her husband that was killed in the war. It's kind of nice, having the boys around. They call me Ben. See, I got a son, too, and I don't see him much. He ain't very nice to me, but maybe I wasn't so nice to my old man, either."

"But the girl's kids, they call me Ben," Benny said. "One of them's twelve, and the other's fourteen. And I had a fight with the girl, see? And I didn't come round for a couple days, and they said to her, 'Can't you get back with Ben again? Can't you make it up with him?' It's things like that you think about when you're alone."

"It's the things you think about that matter. It's all in here." Benny pointed to his head, and straightened the lapel of his coat as he brought his hand down. "If you got something, it's in here, and it don't matter if you got a buck or not. I can just sit and think all day long, and I'm happy, cause I got it in here. Like my girl. She knows what I want. She knows what to say, and when to make a cup of coffee."

Benny thought for a minute before answering the question. "Am I going to marry her? Well, I don't know. I'm kind of old, and she's kind of old. I'm all beat up, like you get when you're old. Your teeth hurt, and your back aches, and you feel lousey all the time. You go to bed, and you don't know if you'll get up in the morning or not. I'm kind of

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beat up, and she's kind of beat up, too. But I got something, and she's got something. You could say, 'We got something.'

"You can't tell what you'll do when you're old and beat up," Benny said. "You can't never tell."

Tom Jones

don't know

"Let's have a party," said the boy.
"Yes," said the girl, "let's have a party."
"Yes," said the boy, "let's have a party."
"Yes," said the girl, "let's have a party."
"Yes," said the boy, "let's have a party."
"Yes," said the girl, "let's have a party."

Duo Viae

A row of books in mousey grey
sweet symbols of and means to pleasure
the aesthete scholar's petty way
who hordes such joys in temperate measure.

O neatly he divides each day
between his work and soul's increase
and subdivided every way
until through boredom all life cease.

His thoughts soar high on pinions grand
through halls aglow with gold mosiac.
Experience at second hand
is very safe though quite prosaic.

On Plato he may daily nibble,
consume him slow as is so fitting,
but time and I too often quibble.
I'll eat him at one sitting.

O he may prove his way quite good
through some philosopher's wise saying.
Ignorant but alive I could
consider such no more thar playthings.

His love is slow methodical
digestion and high contemplation.
I'm a bit too prodigal
to miss a woman's flesh's sensation.

But let him have his walled in nooks.
Experience has but few expences.
He pays by slaving in a book.
I gather freely from my senses.

Anon.

Two Vise

A row of books in monsey grey
sweet symbols of and means to pleasure
the aesthete scholar's petty way
who hordes such joys in temperate measure.

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between his work and soul's increase
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Anon.

The mystic moon as host, the chanting stars
in night's cathedral consecrate their gods
While Rog and Oscar leaning cross the bar
blaspheme with laughter and with knowing nods
The leaves leap from their father's trembling limb
and swim down through the crevice of the air
While Murphy takes his wife, the lights quite dim
He fumbles for protectors on the chair.
And Orpheus the wind sings through the night
the pines his lyre, Euridice the sea
While Jadie stomps his feet in rymes might
the Juke Box's screeching foul obscenity
But even the angles fell into abuses
and matter excreted had some sorts of uses.

Anon.

Concerning My Age

I admit that I don't seek medical advice as often as health conscious people should, and I seldom visit the same physician more than once. The latter is no crime, for like most individuals I dislike persuing personal matters with total strangers, even if they are doctors.

A recent experience, however, makes me wonder if I haven't been missing a little of the spice that brightens the medical profession. Or am I wrong?

A certain doctor, whom I shall call Dr. C..., and whom I have visited before, had seemed to know his pills and charged a reasonable fee. I decided to chance a second call at his office.

A lady dressed in white and smelling of alcohol or something ushered me into a trim little room glittering horribly with shiny instruments of the trade, and placing a folder on the desk, she went out again. I waited patiently (or should I say like a patient) for about five minutes. He came in attired in one of those stiff coats that button along the side. Why don't they button them up the front like other people?

"Ah, Mrs. P....?"

"Yes."

"How old are you?"

"Thirty-four."

He looked at a card which he had drawn from the folder and questioningly at me.

"According to the info here, you visited my office a little less than two years ago, and you gave your age as thirty-four."

I saw immediately that there must have been a mistake somehow. In the same instant I was siezed by one of those rare playful moods. I am neither a practical joker nor a defrauder, but I couldn't resist this golden opportunity. Using a very matter-of-fact tone I replied, "Oh, I've been thirty-four a long time."

Dr. C... smiled. "Of course. But what is your real age?"

"Thirty-four."

He stared blankly. I was thoroughly enjoying the situation. It was no fault of mine that someone had typed in the wrong figure, and I've always been truthful about my age. I mean it.

The good soul tried again. "In what year were you born?"

"In '36."

He made some rapid calculations on a notepad. I think he was too bewildered to do it otherwise. Frowning impatiently he removed the stethoscope from around his neck and laid it on the desk.

"I'm certain, Mrs. P..., that you are somewhat older than eighteen."

I smiled sweetly. "I just give people that date to keep them mystified."

Dr. C... suddenly looked very tired. "I assure you, Mrs. P..., that I am only trying to cooperate in order to give you the very best of attention."

"Why Doctor. You make me think I've been evading you."

At that he snatched up his stethoscope and moaned, "I give up."

I did too.

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I did too.

Episode

All was nothing,
nothing all;
gasses whirling,
to a ball.

Dry and moist,
dark and glare,
and then a rock,
barren, bare.

First the East,
and then the West;
finally all,
stopped to rest.

Water came,
and life began;
things were mixed,
and there was man.

Man was mixed,
and there were men;
water came
to start again,

Epitaph

All was nothing,

nothing all;

casual whirling,

to a fall.

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Men found the world,
and all was new,
they conquered it,
in mottled crew.

And it was theirs,
they had to stay;
until the time,
will come someday...
when...

All is nothing,
nothing all;
gasses whirling,
to a ball.

Anon.

I Wonder

Penetrating, piercing, plunging, thoughts
Searching, seeking, straining within
Curiosity, contemplation, consciousness wroughts -
Relinquish, revelation, right versus sin?

Perturbed, puzzled, prosecuted my friend
" Sit, sigh and suppress the strain.
Calmly collect, cuts will mend -
Reflection, recall, remember the pain?

Perhaps predilection postpones the game
So far, so good, so try, the plan.
Cannot conscience concede one claim
Relieve, relax, remold the man?

Penetrating, piercing, plunging thoughts
Searching, seeking, straining within.
Curiosity, contemplation, conscious wroughts -
Restlessly racing, can the noble mind win?

Crashing, crumbling, cursing; then silent
Can your efforts mean so much
Crushing brutality, intellectually dispense
The thoughts would never occur as such.

Penetrating, piercing, plunging, thoughts
Searching, seeking, straining within
Curiosity, contemplation, consciousness wroughts -
Believing, revelation, right versus sin?

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Penetrating, piercing, plunging thoughts
Searching, seeking, straining within
Curiosity, contemplation, conscious wroughts -
Restlessly racing, can the noble mind win?

Grasping, crumbling, cursing; then silent
Can your efforts mean so much
Grasping fruitlessly, intellectually dispense
The thoughts would never occur as such.

Only to you but perhaps to us all
Are you, am I so different, so proud
Defiant, conceited, men though we fall
The heart beats true, no head is bowed.

Why can't we overcome the foe
One swift glance at the final score
If curiosity were determined so
There'd be no bother any more.

Victory would become a defeated cry
Not so among the battle's din
I cannot tell you, reason why
The road is better than the inn.

Life is clear exposed to reason
Books, pedantics, higher learning
Perhaps we all have reached the season
Better tuned and more discerning.

Yes, it is all so easy, why frown
Relax, have some wine my friend
Day is done, the sun is down
But wait, is this the final end?

But what is this the living end?

Day is gone, the sun is down

Heaven, welcome with my living

Love, it is all so easy, my love

Better, richer and more glorious

Perhaps we will have touched the earth

Books, beginning, with the beginning

Life is just exposed to reason

The Lord is better than the sun

I cannot tell you, because my

Not so much the people, is my

Altogether more, because a different city

There, it is no longer my love

It is not only a love, but a love

One with a love, as the living word

My love, as the love of the

The love, as the love, as the love

Deeper, conceived, as the love

My love, as I so different, as the love

Only to love, as the love

Of course tommorrow, that's the day
Challenge upon challenge never ending
There can be no other way
Keep a clear eye, no head bending.

Best to turn up every page
Drive your heart to the final beat
Squeeze the most from every age
Try them all, you'll find life sweet.

Darley

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Darley

The Warsaw Concerto

It is the beating of a storm -
The violent pounding of thunder
Within my breast.

With every note; I breath, with
A wild, reckless, surging, restlessness.
Oh! - but to reach out
And touch

The infinite magic and madness
Of this work.

The touch of God - A bit of genius
A throbbing - piercing masterpiece.
Art - At it's peak - Heavenly
Rapturour overtones.

Masterful conquest - tender defeat.

My Earth! My God!
I stretch forth my arms -
My soul is torn - My heart
Renders forth -
Through my lips -
A murmured sigh - expressing the
Fullness, the impact of this
Utter infinity.

Much as the setting sun,
Whose beauty may not be
Erased from ones mind,
So is its roof of life
Planted forever within ones self.

pleased to have you here

so to the foot of the

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The vibrant strains
Fulfill absolute ecstasy.
It is a glory - magnified
By the haunting wistful strains
Of immovable force,
Which continue to ring gently
Within my whole being.
As I try to slumber, Oh,
That sleep should come -
Surely that would be
Complete fulfillment!

Anon.

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Anon.

Sitting here
Making rings on the table
With the bottom of my
Glass,

I think of
Times that were,
Are no more,
And can never be again.

The times
When love was young,
And the blood ran warm
At just a thought.

When passion ruled
Not only the head
But also reigned in the
Heart.

Yes, those times
Have gone
When love was green and tart.

The years took away
Youth and passion
But left my aging heart.

Sitting here
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The times
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Yes, those times
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Pate Long

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Passion

I

The sun rises
And smiles
The birds waken
And rejoice
The dew dries
And the day is happy
You come
And life is complete.

J.F.D.

II

To sit and think
Think, think and think
Past, present and the future
To think about the long ago
The here and the hereafter
To wonder why the road so far
Ran on the route it ran
To look with hope into the eyes
Of the eternal plan.

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J.F.D.

Joel

I met Ann at the Unitarian church, down in Boston. She seemed a nice girl, quiet and pleasant spoken, several years older than myself. I asked her to go to the movies, and we had several dates. She was always friendly, never affectionate, always agreeable, never enthusiastic. She seemed somehow worn out, like a woman of fifty. I would try to interest her in some excitement, a baseball game or a stock car race, and she would smile and say yes, that was fun, but that was all.

It was not until we had known each other about a month that I found out what it was that made her seem so detached, so weary of all but the most superficial relationships.

We were sitting in my car in a drive in restaurant down by the river. She said, "I hate to ask you this, because I really don't know you very well, but you're the only one I know at all who has a car. I have to go to my husbands and get my things. Would you.....?"

"You're married?" I asked incredulously. "I didn't know that."

"I don't tell people much. I'm getting a divorce as soon as I can."

"Yes, of course I'll help you carry the stuff. But what is all this? Won't you tell me?"

It was as if I had given a password which opened a door. She told me, all in a rush, everything she must have wanted to tell someone for months. It came out with a few tears, a few rueful smiles, as if she were an innocent, confessing to an astonished priest her mortal sin.

* * * *

Joel was a Jew, ten years older than Ann, whom she met on a summer evening at a Y dance. She was twenty-one then, and her father had been dead most of a year. The boys at the dance were the surly, greasy, exhibitionistic fops which are the inevitable product of a Boston childhood. She had seen their kind at all the dances she had ever been to, and not much of anything else. To a minister's daughter, naive and idealistic, brought up on Tennyson and Jane Eyre, their coarseness and vulgarity were repulsive.

Joel was different. His very Jewishness made him so. It was something foreign and romantic, hinting at who knew what secret excitements. He was civilized, even cultured. He could talk to her about the books which she had read in college, and talk with a real appreciation and interest. He had spent many years studying the piano, and could be interesting about that, too. He said that he was working on a novel which he hoped to finish within the year, and meanwhile, he was earning a living as a machinist.

They were married three weeks later. Her mother objected, of course, to marrying anyone on such short notice, much more a man who had been divorced before. Ann had her own misgivings, but she married him with a determination that

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here was someone with at least a grain of poetry, a thimbleful of romance about him.

Her disillusion came soon, came with an understanding of what he really was. Apparently, Joel had been a normal child, but in the process of growing up, somewhere in the raze of early adolescence, something had happened, or rather, something hadn't happened. The results had been all encompassing, though their effects were not felt for many years, but, subtilely, Joel changed. He bacame somber and morose, burying himself more and more in his music. He spoke roughly to everyone, spoke in a way that too easily showed his fear, his hate, his distrust.

But by the time Ann met him, he was in another, more permanent phase. He spoke quietly and with extreme calm. He appeared embarassed and ill at ease much of the time. By that time it was hard to tell that beneath an exterior of quiet nervousness smoked the most violant jealousy, the most incredible suspicion.

Ann had suggestions of the real Joel forced upon her before the marriage. An occasional word, a manner of speaking, some little thing that he wuold do would seem strange to her, but she would pass it off, would say that no one was perfect, and that, if he had his bad points, she would help him to be better. For idealism, once its direction is detirmined, is not swayed by ambiguity nor other minor particulars, but will go on, on until the one who has been cursed with it will drop from sheer exhaustion, and will cry out, with their expiring breath, "Enough!"

Joel did not change as soon as the ~~marriage~~ ceremony was said; in fact, he never changed at all. He never spoke shaprly nor raised his voice. He styled himself as the slightly persecuted but cheerful altruist, pointing out what was right, but meekly turning the other cheek in case you chose to do wrong anyway. It was the things which he considered right which were the strange part. They didn't make any kind of sense, and he couldn't be brought to see where it was that he was wrongheaded. When Ann, full of desire to make a "real" marriage, said that they should share everything, he suggested that she stop her teachers' college and go to work so that they could share the bills. And he insisted on it in such a pleasant, repetitious, calm manner that finally she did go to work, leaving school half a year before graduation. She never did get her degree, nor get to teach, a thing she had wanted ever since she could remember.

She took a job in an office. The work was light and ineffectual, without purpose of future, but she did not mind, as it gave her time to think about her marriage, an how she could make it better. But Joel would not let her rest. He said that, as he had a job in industry, she should have a job in industry, too, meaning that it irked him to see that she did not mind her job.

Gentle and persistant, he broke her down within a few monthes to the point where she did get a job on a production line. It was hard work, stapling large, corrugated boxes together. While two others folded the boxes, she jumped

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from one end to the other, stapling. She came home at night, dog tired, to find Joel quietly, insistently demanding that dinner be prepared, for that was "woman's work".

His strange difficulties were still with him. While he did not seem to brood on it, (he had come to regard himself as perfectly normal) still it ran on, slowly but deep, under the surface of everything. And so, for Ann, if the days were a horror, what were the nights?

She stayed with him for five years. At last, she had had enough, for her idealism was spent, and one morning she said, "Joel, I'm leaving you," and she left him. She did not see him again until the night when we went over to get her belongings, four months later.

* * * * *

When we arrived, Joel was dressed in immaculate sports clothes, clothes which contrasted sharply with the rundown tenement in which he lived. He was in his invariable, feigned agreeable mood. He had iced a bottle of white wine for us, and we sat around and drank the wine, and he played some debussy on the piano. Ann told me later that it was practically the only piece he could play any more, that he kept it polished for just such occasions. At the start, I did not know that, and I was nearly taken in by him. She had told me what to expect, but it was all so convincing that I began to believe him to be the martyred figure which he so hoped I would see. But Ann was not deceived, and kept breaking into the conversation to insist that we get on with the business of the evening. Then Joel would look at me with a sad and knowing smile, as if to say, "I tried, but what could anyone do with her?" I began to wonder if he was not right. What could anyone do with her? Perhaps she had told me only her own warped, bitter version of the thing.

They began to go through the apartment. To practically everything that Ann picked up and put in the pile to be taken down to the car, he would say, "That's mine, but you can take it if you like."

"What a liar you are, Joel. You know damned well Mother gave that to me for a birthday present."

Another sad, knowing smile. "That's all right, Annie. You can take it if you like."

She seemed completely unmoved by what he said, but would take the object and put it firmly in the pile.

It was not until an hour had passed that I began to understand Joel. I first noticed that his apparent calm was belied by his inability to stand still. He was forever pacing from one room to another, coming into the room where I was sitting to play a few bars on the piano or say something silly, then to the bedroom, where Ann was rummaging in a bureau, then on to the kitchen to get a glass of water. He had often to clean his glasses, or wipe the sweat off his forehead, though it was not particularly hot in the apartment. Perhaps it was just natural nervousness; after all, it was a difficult situation. But no, there was something more to it, something much blacker. Like some carnivorous beast, he was stalking Ann. I could only watch, fascinated.

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He would start a discussion with me, and then break off with an, "I'd better see what Annie's doing." There was something obnoxious in the way he called her Annie, something to intimate for their current status. I noticed, too, that once or twice he put his hand on her with a proprietary gesture. Each time, she withdrew violently, and once she even slapped his hand. She seemed unnecessarily firm with him.

The apartment was oddly furnished. There were many of the things that you find in an ordinary, run-down place, the cheap, rickety furniture, the sagging bed with its dirty linen, the worn linoleum on the floor. But there were also a few symbols of Joel's none too devout Judaism scattered around, and drawings which he had done at a night school art course. A magnificent piano sat in the living room. There was a cane standing in the corner, proclaiming "Atlantic City, New Jersey", and some vulgar postcards tacked to the wall. "It's sort of nice, for bachelor's quarters, don't you think?" asked Joel, coming back into the room where I was.

He sat down with me once again and began to talk about Ann. It was then that his meanness, I should say his strangeness, became fully apparent. He did not know what our relationship was, and was anxious to find out. When I had satisfied him that I was just a casual friend who happened to have a car, he began to tell me about her, trying to poison my mind against her.

"The biggest trouble with Annie," he said, "is that she will not allow herself to be weaned from her father. She is forever running out to Newton to see him. She just won't break away.

"Then, too, she's unbelievably lazy. She didn't do a day's work all the years she was married to me, and I would come home to find dinner unprepared. She thinks that by divorcing me, everything will suddenly be fine, but it won't, because the trouble is all inside of her.

"But the worst thing about her," he said, leaning over toward me with a lecherous smile, "is that she's frigid.

"I've always thought that, well, I married her, so I should stick by it. I'd made my bed, and I was going to lie in it. But, just between us, now that she's doing the divorcing herself, and it's not on my conscience, I'll be glad to get rid of her! Even if she takes a few little things that are mine and that I'll miss, it'll be well worth it." He could sit still no longer, but got up and went into the bedroom to see what Ann was doing.

Soon there was a commotion. Apparently, there were two things for which she had asked specifically, her loom and her sewing machine. That very afternoon, according to Joel, he had lent them to his sister. But they would be back in a few days. Why didn't Annie stop over again and pick them up? he suggested. There would be no need to bring a friend, for they were easily portable, he said, slipping out of the room.

As soon as he left, Ann began ferreting furiously through the closet, and as I came in to help her, I could see that she was crying. She searched with a passion, trying to

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"Then, too, she's unbelievably lazy. She doesn't do a day's work all the years she was married to me, and I would come home to find dinner unprepared. She thinks that by divorcing me, everything will suddenly be fine, but it won't, because the trouble is all inside of her. But the worst thing about her," he said, leaning over toward me with a lecherous smile, "is that she's afraid. I've always thought that, well, I married her, so I should stick by it. I'd make my bed, and I was going to lie in it. But, just between us, now that she's doing the divorcing herself, and it's not on my conscience, I'll be glad to get rid of her! Even if she takes a few little things that are mine and that I'll miss, it'll be well worth it." He could sit still no longer, but got up and went into the bedroom to see what Ann was doing.

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recover some little thing that would account for the five years spent there, something to make it all worth while. Out of a dark corner, behind some foul smelling old clothes, she dragged the sewing machine and the loom, which was broken.

Joel came back into the room. "Oh, so you found them. I guess I didn't lend them after all." She made a lunging swing at him, but he ducked, giggling, and I pulled her back. I talked to her for a few minutes, telling her that we must get out of here, she must control herself, it would all seem like a bad dream in the street.

At last she calmed down enough to be let go, and she went straight to the pile of things which she had collected. "We'll take the stuff downstairs now," she said. "It'll be several loads for each of us."

"Can't I help?" asked Joel, smiling as if nothing had happened.

"No," she said curtly, and started down the stairs.

He was not at all anxious to see her go. "Oh, stick around for a while. Sit down and have something to drink." She did not answer, but started down stairs which, winding around a foul airshaft, leaned inward at crazy angles as they descended through three or four dark, decaying stories, broken into monotonous little flights and creaking landings.

When we came up for our last load, he was standing in the hallway. His eyes and cheeks looked more sunken, under the bare overhead bulb, and his balding hair was thin and wispy. There was a half smile, ghoulis and expectant, on his lined face. "Why don't you stay for the night, Annie? Just for old time's sake?"

She did not speak, but brushed past him out the door, her arms laden down with books and clothes. I followed, close on her heels, as the stairs were too narrow to be taken abreast. The building was quiet, and we could hear nothing but our own footfalls on the boards as we went down. Ann went down the first flight of steps, thump, thump, thump, thump, and I followed, thump, thump, thump, thump. She began to go faster, almost to run. Thump thump thump thump. I echoed her. Thump thump thump thump. Faster and faster. Thump-thump-thump-thump, thump-thump-thump-thump. Running now, racing, boiling down the stairs, thumpthumpthumpthump, thumpthumpthumpthump, BANG! through the door and out into the cool night air.

While Joel, perhaps, watched from the window, and thought his incredible thoughts.

Tom Jones

recovered some little thing that would account for the time
years spent there, something to make it all worth while.
Out of a dark corner, behind some level, smiling old clothes,
she dragged the sewing machine and the loom, which was
broken.
Joel came back into the room. "OK, so you found them.
I guess I didn't lead them after all." She made a laughing
swing at him, but he ducked, giggling, and I pulled her
back. I talked to her for a few minutes, telling her that
we must get out of here, she must control herself, it would
all seem like a bad dream in the street.
At last she calmed down enough to be let go, and she
went straight to the pile of things which she had collected.
"Will take the stuff downstairs now," she said. "I'll
be several loads for each of us."
"Can't I help?" asked Joel, smiling as if nothing had
happened.
"No," she said curtly, and started down the stairs.
He was not at all anxious to see her go. "OK, sister,
around for a while. Sit down and have something to drink."
She did not answer, but started down stairs which, winding
around a foul airshaft, leaned toward at crazy angles as
they descended through three or four dark, decaying stories,
broken into monstrous little flights and creaking landings.
When we came up for our first load, he was standing in the
hallway. His eyes and open mouth were enough, when the
bars overhead held, and he half way said, and what?
There was a half smile, expecting, on his lined
face. "Why don't you stay, light, light, light for
old time's sake?"
She did not speak, but hurried past him out the door,
her arms laden down with boxes and clothes. It followed,
alone on her heels, as the stairs were too narrow to be taken
abreast. The building was quiet, and we could hear nothing
but our own footfalls on the boards as we went down. And
went down the first flight of steps, thump, thump, thump,
thump, and I followed, thump, thump, thump, thump. She began
to go faster, almost to run. Thump thump thump thump. I
echoed her. Thump thump thump thump. Faster and faster.
Thump-thump-thump-thump, thump-thump-thump-thump. Running
now, racing, bolting down the stairs, thump-thump-thump-thump,
thump-thump-thump-thump, thump-thump-thump-thump, and out into
the cool night air.
While Joel, perhaps, watched from the window, and thought
his incredible thoughts.

Tom Jones

THE MOUNT VERNON MISCELLANY

FALL, 1956

25¢ PER COPY

MR. J. KELLOGG-SMITH

was to have been a judge of our short story and poetry contests. His unseasonable death deprives us of a judge, the arts of a patron, and the world of a friend. We dedicate this issue of the Miscellany to him.

The Mount Vernon Miscellany is published twice annually by the Mount Vernon Literary Society of Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland.

TOM JONES, President

BOBBA NORTON, Secretary

GEORGE DARLEY, Vice-President

PETE RIECKS, Treasurer

HOUND DOG

Why don't you write for the literary society?
Perhaps they might like some variety
To ease the continuity, superfluity, and rhyme.

It only takes an hour or more of endeavor
To seduce a whore and say something clever,
To be witty, neat, sweet and sublime.

I'd like to think that with the time
To have a drink and make a rhyme,
There'd be success undressed becoming to me.

But sobriety and propriety are above a fool,
Surrounded by the society that leaps to ridicule
And smirk and pull down your skirt, I see your knee.

If there were only something proper to be wrote,
A show stopper that strikes a philosophical note,
To make one the Bing Crosby of pedantry.

However, I'm too nefarious to touch the pure tone,
Nor hilarious enough to strike the funny bone.
I'd rather be alone most of the time.

Writing is for those mortals with some insight,
Not for those who chortle and carry on a damn sight
Too much to spend the time on rhyme.

That's why I haven't bothered to write,
Despite the fact I've been hoaxed and coaxed and mothered and
fathered

To stimulate the finer art.

For the trapping of an artist, beyond time and inclination,
It seems to me the hardest are feeling and sensation.
Those attributes of me are not a part.

I prefer to sit and listen to the well turned words
Of others that are always pleasant sounds to hear.
They make my senses glisten
And remind me of two brothers
That like to drink the same cold brand of beer.

GEORGE DARLEY

~~~~~

Mother Night gently extinguishes  
the daylight . . . tucks in the birds  
and animals one by one . . . quietly  
turns on the night lamps of the stars  
. . . croons her lullaby to the peep frogs  
in the marshes . . . then softly settles  
down to watch over her sleeping child-  
ren.

The Sun is the bowling ball of  
the angels, knocking down the stars  
as it rolls down the alley of the horizon.

BOBBA NORTON

There was a young Indian brave,  
Who didn't know how to behave.

A game was created,  
The brave was cremated,  
"La Crosse" now marks his grave.

M. D. GATES

#### SPRING SLANT

As the sun and wind,  
As if petals were air,  
Stand up in the very pit of the flower,  
Shy little nuns in green wear  
Flaming hats

And one lean bug on chinese-  
colored vans

Tripples over the myrtle,  
But the grizzly but of the bee  
Rapes, rapes and rapes.

It is time  
For the flowers with roots,  
and the flowers

With purring propellers, the  
flowers

Of sun and wind

It is clambering time

Time for the slipping into place.

JAMES P. MOUSLEY

#### AGONY IN THE GARDEN

Apple, I am told I cannot eat you,  
You are Daddy's dish, and his alone;  
Though in every ramble here I meet you,  
You were not for my poor palate sown.

Apple, Daddy told me at the starting  
Of his world that, though your taste was best,  
And though my tongue for it was sorely smarting,  
I still must be contented with the rest.

Apple, though the consequence be sorry,  
All my best intentions come to this:  
Your meat so rich, your taste so mandatory,  
Have a mellowness I cannot miss.  
And down will come our Daddy, ringed with glory,  
To plant upon my cheek his Judas kiss.

TOM JONES

~~~~~

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~~~~~

Deadly are my eyes to those  
creatures

That flee not fast  
enough.

M. D. GATES

The reader may be disconcerted  
To find that his thoughts are  
subverted.

To add to his grief  
With comic relief,  
A lim'rick is hereby inserted.

TOM JONES

## VESPERS

The lowing cattle  
have long since  
fallen silent in sleep.  
Leaving hills and  
hearts alone  
with the imprint  
of hooves, and bleeding  
of chewed grass.  
Late, late the farmer  
makes fast the stable door,  
to depart upon a prayer  
of warm milk and honey.  
The wick is pressed  
by the wetted finger—  
the pajamas pushed again upon  
small legs, summer  
seethes outside in the pine-  
tops, and  
his wife lies warm in  
their bed.

JIM CLARK

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SOCIETY AND SOBRIETY, or VICE AND ADVICE, or WHO'S WHO  
AS A SOCIAL OUTCAST, or TWO BEERS PER CUSTOMER

dedicated to those who can't.

It was two o'clock in the afternoon. Harry awoke. For a moment he lay there, gradually gathering his senses and simultaneously becoming aware of a sour stomach and a mouth that seemed full of bare feet. "Hell," he mumbled. He sat up in an initial attempt to get out of bed and then fell back to allow his metabolism a few more seconds to overcome the inertia of a dead man's sleep. He didn't care to look in the mirror, but he would have to stand in front of it to brush his teeth, and at the moment a toothbrush had top priority on the list of things to do. He leaned over and struggled into his slippers, a movement that made him feel that the top of his head might blow off. "Never again," he mumbled. With his shoulders slumped forward he scuffed into the bathroom, treading on the bottoms of his baggy pajamas. He picked up his tooth brush, pasted it, and while he was swishing the cobwebs out of his mouth he looked in the mirror. "What is it?" "It ought to be shot!" Cold water revived him to a greater degree of awareness, so he ran his hand through his tousled hair and went to make some coffee. Juice and coffee was all he could stand at the moment. With the juice he glanced at the paper and with the coffee he had that first cigarette and went over the previous night's activities in order to establish his financial status.

His first stop had been the neighborhood bar with the colorful clientele. It's an ordinary gin-mill. If you've ever been in a bar you know what I mean, and if you haven't been in a bar, then I couldn't begin to describe one effectively. What did the bartender call it? Oh, yes, the squirrel cage. Harry reflected on it with a confused grin. The thought was amusing, but didn't rate a laugh. Besides, it was too early to laugh. The conversation he had had with the bartender was more humorous on reflection.

What a character this bartender was. For instance, he would say, "Yeah, um hum," and walk back and forth behind the bar whistling, no tune, just whistling, and maybe sneak a look at the clock. Then maybe sneak a half a glass of beer. What a repertoire of stories he had. For instance, there's the story of his buddies who went to the funeral at the Catholic church and when they entered the vestibule one of the fellas wanted to know who was wearing the lace curtains. Then the barkeep gave the rundown on customer personalities. One customer buys a ten cent draft and nurses it for an hour while he gapes at the television. And there's a guy who comes in and orders a shrimp salad sandwich with no mayonaise. The bartender also told how they cook crab cakes to order and some guy comes in and wants one cold. Then all of this patter was interrupted when one of the regular customers came in and ordered a meal at the bar. For vegetables he wanted asparagus and broccoli. Tom (that's the bartender) stopped cold and his mouth dropped open. He looked at the customer for a minute and said, "You get mashed potatoes and peas and like it, ya hear?" So after the customer had been served and things settled down a bit, Tom comes back and says, "So you think you got problems?"

With this, Harry waltzed to the back corner of this neighborhood establishment and entered into a very enjoyable game of skill, namely the game of pitch. He played for two hours, during which time he very skillfully lost two dollars and during which time he had several short beers.

The evening's imbibing had been sufficient to cloud his reasoning and release his inner passions. The wristwatch said twelve midnight, which allowed two hours of frolic in the more, shall I say, gay part of the city. The decision being made, I might add there wasn't much of a struggle, he departed for the bright light region.

~~~~~

He turned all of the previous evening over in his mind. He was disgusted, the kind of disgust that comes from having stayed too long in some deadbeat bar, from having squandered money buying drinks for people whose conversation lasted as long as your money, from having slept with a woman who was too expensive. He was disgusted because he couldn't find another cigarette, and besides, he had a headache. He suffered a katharsis because he didn't have the money to start over again, and by belittling his conduct he could more easily endure the circumstance of being broke.

Now he began the analysis in earnest. What about the people in the first bar? At least they were real, and that's a treat in this age of hypocrisy. The evening was like pulling out the plug in an electric clock. Next day you plug it back in again. But how about the other part of the night. That's the part that sickened him, but it only lasted momentarily. He could look at it in retrospect now. It was life. It was raw, but it was life. What does it all mean? "Hell," he says, "better have another cup of coffee. What difference does it make?"

He thought about his athletic days. He remembered when it was good to get up in the morning. There was an anticipation of the day like the opening of a Christmas package. Yes, that's what it was like.

Well, he thought, I'll start fresh. Maybe find a nice girl and settle down. That's what I need, a nice girl. He scrape footed back to the bathroom, dropped his pajamas, and stepped determinedly into the shower. It was great, a shower. Somehow washing the body seemed to wash away the part. He shaved, slowly and carefully. Then he combed his hair. The last move was to run his fingers through his hair once. This had a tendency to thicken it, and when it dried it curled and appeared unruly which made him look more rugged. "Yeah, I'd best find a nice girl to settle me down."

He put on clean underwear and clean dark socks to go with his plain cordovans. To this he added clean tan slacks and a clean white shirt. Everything was clean now. His appetite revived, so he fixed some scrapple and eggs and drank half a quart of milk. Replenished and in a better humor, he sat down with a book; *A Farewell to Arms*, if you must know, and began to read. He said to himself, "This is the life. Good food, a good book; what a wonderful pleasant way to spend the evening."

The phone rang impatiently.

GEORGE DARLEY

~~~~~

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~~~~~

Pressed tightly we are one,
But one by one we are
twenty.
We are straight, stalwart
and firm,
But cremation does us in.
We are like people,
But we cannot think.

M. D. GATES

Murrar, O'Keefe and Heinz
"what reaches
is right."
To the magnet's mind
Stoney in his glass
cave world
P.&E. up 20
Z.&D. down 10
like the mice, blind
upon the clock
The percentages run
in religion of the
squat "Botany" bound
clan;
A raw race so humbly
hewn of plain thoughts
and plain money.

JIM CLARK

CORNEILLE: **LE CID**, a fragmentary translation

Act I, Scene 4.

Don Diegue: O rage! O despair; O hostile old age!
Has my life only lasted for this sorry stage?
And have I grown white with the wars I have made
To see in a day all my green laurels fade?
My arm, which all Spain was wont to admire,
My arm, which how many times saved the empire,
And many a time saved the king his degree,
Deserts my cause now, and does nothing for me?
O wretched repayment for armies I've faced!
Work of so many days in one day effeced!
New honour, by you is my happiness scattered!
Great height, from which honour has plunged and is shattered!
Must I see by your brightness the Count rise to fame,
And die without vengeance, or live in this shame?
Count, for the present you guide the king's son;
The post will not do for a man who's undone;
For I, though the king's choice, unworthy am made
By your jealous desires, in this deed displayed.
And you, of my exploits the glorious tool,
But now an old man's ineffectual jewel,
Sword, formerly feared but which, in this offence,
Has served me for dress, but not for defense,
Go, leave me hereafter the least of my kind,
And be for my vengeance with young hands entwined.

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CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND

Secen 5

Don Diegue: Rodrigue, are you brave?

Rodrigue:

If you were not my sire

I would prove it this moment.

Don D.:

O marvelous fire!

O worthy resentment, to sorrow how sweet!

I see my own blood in this laudable heat;

My youth is revived in the glow of this ardour.

Come, my son, come, my blood, come recover my honour;

Come and venge me.

Rod:

For what?

Don D.:

For a deed so low

It imports to the honour of both a death blow;

For a slap. The insolant villian would die,

Did my age not my strongest desire belie;

And this sword, which my arm can no longer employ,

I commend to your own to avenge and destroy.

Go, give to the arrogant one his desert;

It is only with blood that one cleans such a hurt:

Kill or die. But as I must inform you aright,

I give you a man to dread in a fight.

I have seen him, covered with the blood of the dead,

Filling an enemy army with dread.

I have seen fifty squadrons destroyed by his will;

And to tell you another, a graver thing still,

More than a captain, and more than a man,

He is . . .

Rod:

Pray, tell me.

Don D.:

The sire of Chimene.

Rod: The . . .

Don D.:

You need not reply; I know of your flame,

But he whos' disgraced is unworthy of name.

If the villain is dear, the villainy's worse.

You know the affront, and you know of its curse:

I will tell you no more. Venge me, venge yourself;

Show that you are the son of a man like myself.

Sorrows o'erwhelm me and fate overawes;

I retire to weep: go, run, fly to our cause.

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Scene 6

Rodrigue: Pierced at the base of the heart
By a blow that is both unexpected and mortal,
Unhappy avenger for a most just quarrel,
And miserable object of an unjust smart,
Lifeless I lie, and my heart without will

Bends to the blow that will kill.

So near to receiving my flames recompence,

O God! O strange pain!

This dire affront is the Count's offence,

And the count is the sire of Chimene.

Let me hear some savage alarm!

Against my own honour my love takes a part:

I must uphold my father, and so lose my heart;

One tugs at my heart, and the other my arm.

I am sadly reduced to betray by flame,

Or live with a snullied name.

On both sides my joy is deserted,

O God! O strange pain!

Must I leave this affront unpunished?

Must I punish the sire of Chimene?

Father, mistress, honour, love,

Lovable tyranny, hard but noble constraint,

All my pleasures must die, or my fame have a taint;

One I cannot endure, nor the other approve.

Dear, cruel hope of my dignity's sore,

You I cannot but adore,

Worthy foe of my consummate pleasure,

Sword, which causes my pain,

Were you given to uphold my honour?

Were you given to lose my Chimene?

It would be better to die.

I'm obliged to my mistress as well as my sire;

I arouse by my vengeance her hate and her ire;

I arouse her disdain if I make no reply.

To my sweetest desire one make me untrue,

And the other unworthy of you.

My woe is increased by my longing to fight,

All redoubles my pain.

Come then, my heart, if to perish is right,

Let us perish and not wound Chimene.

Die without settling my feud!

Search for a death so deadly to fame!

Endure the impute of all Spain to my name

That I failed to uphold the acclaim of my blood!

Respect a love which my tortured heart

Knows is sure to depart!

No longer heed this seductive thought,

Which can only cause me pain.

Come, my arm, let us do what we ought;

In the end I must lose my Chimene.

Yes, that my decision must be.

I owe all to my father, and not to my mistress:

Let me perish in combat, or perish of sadness,

Restoring my blood as t'was given to me.

Already I know that I too much defray;

Let me venge without delay.

I'm abashed to have wavered so long;

Let me be no more at pain,

For my sire has suffered a wrong,

Be the villain the sire of Chimene.

TOM JONES

Friendless beings that we are;
void in thought.
is it true?

My dear
friend
he says

I says
God be with you
(aside)

You rogue
(aside)
You rogue.

What awareness is there to know
what deciet
What fallacy on our part to
believe
what friend

The friend indeed is the friend
who is not
needed

What say?
But think you

The friend who is not
Know him well.

D. M. GATES

AGAINST THE DARK
for J. S. Edwards
my mentor

you took
the hand of the fawn

gave him
white limbs to leap on

blue eyed does to nimble
among the vines

and red red books
to sleep on.

Zoooooom!
Listen! What was that?
Can't wait
I'm late,
Important date?
No time!
Hic dic doc, mouse up clock.
Clock had no time for himmmm.
Stuff stuff, slerp, sssip,
Zoooooom,
SPEEDY!
Exercise, son.
O.K., Doc.
Good evening Mr. and Mrs.
America Everywhere.

FLASH!!
Hurry up please, it's time.
M. D. GATES

Subscribers may find it their
woe,
That our quality's pitifully
loe;
But we'll go to the bird
If you don't read a word,
For you've bought it, and we
have your doe.
TOM JONES

he will not forget
your autumn eyes
when guarrels and songs
and blurred brilliant things
surround the loud pond again
come april

he will keep
your eyes in his antlers

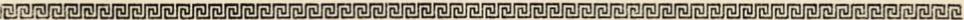
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THE MOUNT VERNON LITERARY SOCIETY

announces a short story contest and a poetry contest

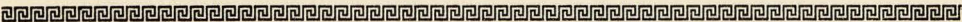
The judges to be: Dr. Gerda Blumenthal, Mr. Robert Forney, and Dr. Margaret Newlim.

No short story may exceed 5000 words. No individual may submit more than two.

No poem may exceed 100 lines. No individual may submit more than three.

All manuscripts must be typed. They should NOT be signed, but placed in an envelope with the title of the piece and the author's name on the envelope. They may be submitted to any officer of the Mount Vernon before noon on Friday, March 15, 1957.

The prizes will be a volume of contemporary short stories and a volume of contemporary poetry. The Mount Vernon reserves the right to use any entry in the Spring issue of the Miscellany. The winners will be published with appropriate citations. All manuscripts will be returned to the authors, and all future publishing rights will belong to the authors.



THE MOUNT VERNON LIBRARY SOCIETY

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

The purpose of the Mount Vernon Library Society is to acquire, collect, and preserve books, manuscripts, and other materials of historical interest.

The society shall be organized on a non-profit basis and shall be governed by a board of directors.

The society shall have the right to acquire, collect, and preserve books, manuscripts, and other materials of historical interest.

All members shall be eligible to vote in the election of directors and to hold office.

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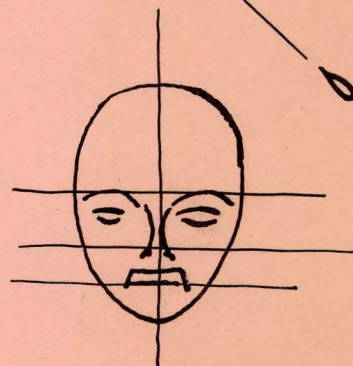
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MISCELLANY

WINTER

1956

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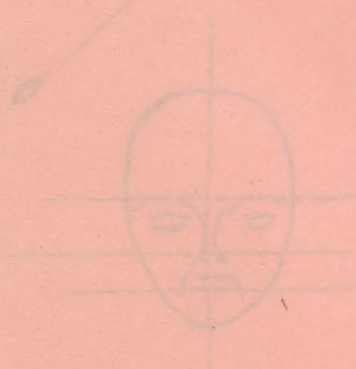
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MISCELLANY

WINTER

1956

\$ 25



THE MOUNT VERNON MISCELLANY

WINTER, 1956

printed thrice annually by
The Mount Vernon Literary Society

J. Aldo Gallo	President
Elinor Hempstead	Vice-President
John Howard	Secretary
Henry Riecks	Treasurer

This magazine, lacking in wit,
Enlightening not by a whit,
Is, nevertheless,
An attempt to express
The ideals of the Mount Vernon Lit.

George Hanst

George H. H. H.

The Agents of the Mount Vernon Hotel
in response to express
is "nevertheless"
The Mount Vernon Hotel
The Mount Vernon Hotel

Mount Vernon	Hotel
Mount Vernon	Hotel
Mount Vernon	Hotel
Mount Vernon	Hotel

The Mount Vernon Hotel
The Mount Vernon Hotel

Mount Vernon

The Mount Vernon Hotel

Remnants from a potato chip bag:

Ree-joahce!

Black and purple
Sing a song:
"Ree-joahce!"
"He wadn't heah
Awful long."
"Ree-joahce!"

"He wer' a
Good man too!"
"Ree-joahce!"
"Will dey say
Dat 'bout you?"
"Ree-joahce!"

"Sho', eben
If neba,"
"Ree-joahce!"
"Yo' pondah'd
Da weada!"
"Ree-joahce!"

Twenty point on bond

Twenty point on bond,
Clear,
Big,
Black on white, tell me!
Emmy Lou, is it
You?
Or,
More blest, is it we?
Gruff, pure, a center
Line.
But,
Add a twist of lime.

Henry Riecks

housi ytoora

was a sister of mine
her
time
died, she was a soldier
who died in the war
of
her
her son is a
black on white, that was
her
died
died, her son was

died, her son was

"Hoo-looksee!"
De looksee!
"Ho, brother,
"Hoo-looksee!"
It were!"
"Hoo, hoo"

"Hoo-looksee!"
De looksee!
"Hoo, hoo!"
"Hoo-looksee!"
Good man, hoo!"
"Hoo, hoo, hoo"

"Hoo-looksee!"
Hoo, hoo!"
"Ho, hoo, hoo!"
"Hoo-looksee!"
Hoo, hoo!"
Black and white

Hoo-looksee!

hoo-looksee! hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo:

Idem sunt caritas et amor

All summer long God throws no rain
and prematurely brown the stalks
like withered ghosts, have come to stain
the soil, which great past honors bore
will never come to fruit.

Once souls beneath the summer moon
soared high ~~upon~~ the crickett's hum.
Now the liquid stores of love's tune
dry quickly once the song is done
and Venus casts a useless ruine
to hearts burnt dry and dying in the sun.
But if the giants, black, forboding,
however heavily in the menacing east,
drop their too long celebrate loadings,
those quivering fields unknowingly blest
criss-crossed, will ressurect into harvest.

Oh, does only love revive
souls warped by dryness
to so sterile death?
Then feel the breath
of love whispering
in your ear softly of life.

Sonnet

When night's dark drearsome hours
ride their spectre horses to the west
and the dew drops down on the flowers
to seize her daily rest,
When day stalks forth from the sea
to brandish the sun's bright fire
whirling it ever so fiercely
over night's dying desire,
Then driven by day's awful might
I flee my paradise of dreams,
those gardens where a holy light
surround the roses where she leans
and draws a blood-red rose apart
as slowly as she drew my heart.

Anon.

A fraternity-minded young guy
Found that Thetas and Sigs passed him by;
The Foos and K. A.
Rushed him day after day.
Disgusted, he went G. D. I.

George Hanst

Idem sent earlier at noon

All summer long God throws no rain
and prematurely brown the stalks
like withered ghosts, have come to stain
the soil, which great past honors bore
will never come to fruit.

Once souls beneath the summer moon
seated high upon the cricket's hum.
Now the lipid stores of love's tune
dry quickly once the song is done
and Venus casts a useless ruin
to hearts burnt dry and dying in the sun.
But all the glazes, black, forbidding,
however heavily in the menacing east,
drop their too long elaborate loadings,
those quivering fields unknowingly blast
criss-crossed, will reassemble into harvest.

Oh, does only love revive
souls warped by dryness
to so sterile death?
Then feel the breath
of love whispering
in your ear softly of life.

Sonnet

When night's dark dreamsome hours
ride their spectre horses to the west
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to brandish the sun's bright fire
whirling it ever so fiercely
over night's dying desire,
Then driven by day's awful might
I flee my paradise of dreams,
those gardens where a holy light
surrounds the roses where she leans
and draws a blood-red rose apart
as slowly as she drew my heart.

Anon.

A first-year-minded young guy
found that Thelma and Edna passed him by;
The Poole and K. A.
Rushed him day after day.
Disgusted, he went G. D. I.

George Hanat

Vacuums

People
Usually
Congenial
(A generality)
As most things are.
Sometimes nice
Some not so nice
Like white mice.
Share the same habits
Are they called Babbitts?
Some go to musicals
(In circles as squares)
Others with
Pepper, spice and spite
May build tension.
They may be snobs
Others bob-hobs
(Keep up with Mr. Magoo)
Hours pass
Time observed
Unobserved or unknown
Sometimes excitement
Sometimes drudgery
Thinking sometimes
Not required
Usually, not wanted.
Identity unknown
To many or to few
Where is release?
From what?
Emotions? - Thoughts? - Vacuums -

Nightfall in Music

Night ends as the
Sweetness of music.
Sweeping chords
Does not bruise a flower
Nor pain a soul
Stirs emotions of life
Music, so strong
So beautiful,
So much a part of me.

Eva Corliss

Vacuum

People
Usually
Congenial
(A generally)
As most things are.
Sometimes nice
Some not so nice
Like white mice.
Share the same habits
Are they called rabbits?
Some go to museums
(In circles as squares)
Others with
Paper, spice and spice
May build tension.
They may be snobs
Others bob-hobs
(Keep up with Mr. Magoo)
Hours pass
Time observed
Unobserved or unknown
Sometimes excitement
Sometimes anxiety
Thinking sometimes
Not required
Usually, not wanted.
Identify unknown
To many or to few
Where is release?
From what?
Emotions? - Thoughts? - Vacuum -

Nightfall in Music

Night ends as the
Sweetness of music.
Sweeping chords
Does not bruise a flower
Nor pain a soul
Still emotions of life
Music, so strong
So beautiful,
So much a part of me.

Eva Corlies

Laughter Falls

Laughter falls from golden heights.
Stars and rose mauve end the day.
Lights glow along white shores.
Happy voices blending into
The rise and fall of the cool green waves.
Here, as I stand, trees whisper
A dark, velvet mystery.
The clouds fold above into
The coming night.
Joining hands, we wander
Through the luminous trail
Of a shooting star. Do we see?
Do we know that a bird
Rising in flight has touched our souls?

Sun of my Life

Your hand is on my heart.
I lift my eyes
And meet your gaze.
My soul rises
To meet the Sun.
We smile in harmony
Of Understanding.
Our lives touch
Each other gently,
Quietly, as a
Peaceful movement
Between two lights.
Two spirits meet
In ecstasy of love.
Yet we remain
Not one, a part of the other,
A broken fragment of
The whole,
But forever two beings
Separate and complete
Within ourselves.

Eva Corliss

Laughter Falls

Laughter falls from golden heights,
 Stars and rose mauve and the day,
 Lights glow along white shores,
 Happy voices blending into
 The rise and fall of the cool green waves.
 Here, as I stand, trees whisper
 A dark, velvet mystery.
 The clouds fold above into
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 Not one, a part of the other,
 A broken fragment of
 The whole,
 But forever two beings
 Separate and complete
 Within ourselves.

Eva Corlies

for L. L. C. D.

Why not burn Troy?
The storied towers of old
With all their gorgeous gold
Thy beauty could destroy.

Why tarry thou with me?
The Troad awaits thee mute,
While Homer tunes his lute,
And Paris longs for thee.

Use then those powers of thine,
Sublime! Divine! Why not
Burn Troy? The glory got
Sings fairer song than mine.

Catullus' epigram "To Amenias"

Greetings, girl with not the sweetest sighs,
With not the loveliest feet nor darkest eyes,
Not with the graces of a noble mind,
Nor with a manner any too refined.

Do coarse provincials commendations send
To thee, thou friend to Caesar's bankrupt friend?
Art fairer than my Lesbia indeed,
Thou uncouth offspring of a bastard breed?

Motorcycle

Speed drunken, high ride
And through the saffron summer
Midge eat, down dusty blown the lane
High ride! and would I,
With drag footed throb throbbing,
Fly for thee.

Chain sing gear sing throb song heart sung,
And bludgeon breasted wind shattering
Ah, the matter is: High ride!
And through the saffron summer
Would I, Oh my God,
Hurtle down thee on to death!

Tom Jones

for I. L. D.

Why not burn Troy?
The storied towers of old
With all their gorgeous gold
Thy beauty could destroy.

Why carry them with me?
The Troad awaits thee mute,
While Homer tunes his lute,
And Paris longs for thee.

Use then these powers of thine,
Sublime! Divine! Why not
Burn Troy? The glory got
Shall fairer song than mine.

Catullus' epigram "To America"

Greetings, girl with not the sweetest sighs,
With not the loveliest feet nor darkest eyes,
Not with the graces of a noble mind,
Nor with a manner any too refined.
Do coarse provincial commendations send
To thee, thou friend to Caesar's banished friend?
Art fairer than my Lesbia indeed,
Thou uncouth offspring of a bastard breed?

Motorcycle

Speed drunken, high ride
And through the sallow summer
Midge eat, down dusty blown the lane
High ride! and would I,
With drag footed thro' throbbling,
Fly for thee.

Again sing gear sing thro' song heart song,
And bludgeon pressed wind skattering
Ah, the matter is: High ride!
And through the sallow summer
Would I, Oh my God,
Hurtle down thee on to death!

Tom Jones

Matthew 13

The fowls of the air
devoured the word;
Stolen my prayer
filled soul from the Lord.
The stones of my mind,
too barren and hard
for the Lord to find
abode for the word.
Religious prison
stolen from me.
But ever that rogue
my mind goes free.

Anon.

"Let's study," said typical Flynn,
Who opened his book at six-ten.
After practicing all
Of the methods to stall
He was ready to start to begin.

Ann pledged a sorority group
Which to any low level would stoop.
Alpha Chis don't miscue,
Nor the Zetas, true-blue;
It was free food that sold A O Poop.

Conversation at Dean Bradley's tea
Was as garbled as any can be.
"Em eye see," it began,
"Kay ee why," on it ran,
And continued, "Em owe you ess ee."

George Hanst

The fowls of the air
devoured the word;
Stolen my prayer
filled soul from the Lord.
The stones of my mind,
too barren and hard
for the Lord to find
abode for the word.
Religious prison
stolen from me,
But ever that room
my mind goes free
again.

"Let's study," said typical Flynn,
who opened his book at six-ten.
After practicing all
Of the methods to recall
He was ready to start to begin.

Ann pledged a sorority group
Which to any level would stoop.
Alpha Chi's don't miscue,
Nor the Beta, true-blue;
It was free food that sold A O Pop.

Conversation at Dean Bradley's tea
Was as garbled as any can be.
"Em eye see," it began,
"Kay ee why," on it ran,
and continued, "Em wee you see ee."

George Ernst

The Garden

"Oh, what a pretty garden, Ma!"

"Hush! Oh, Father, you startled me."

"Mama, tell that pepsodent boy
Not to appear so suddenly."

"This is my garden, child,
Which my enemies make grow."

"Oh, have you enemies, old man?"

"Many, but all harmless."

"Would any fight you, old man?"

"Doctors fight me when they can,
But their fight is hopeless
And nothing can they save."

"And enemies make your garden grow?
I'll make you a garden."

"Yes, I know."

"Come, child, you're standing on a grave."

Tom Knight

A Reverend Smith nicknamed Bill,
A man most abundant in skill,
Over-rated his knowledge
When building his college
On the swamp he mistook for a hill.

A studious sophomore lass,
Asked her prof what her grade was in class.
With impartial order
He flipped up-a quarter,
Said "Heads!" and declared she would pass.

George Hanst

The Garden

"Oh, what a pretty garden, Nell!"

"Hush! Oh, Father, you startled me."

"Nanny, tell that peevish boy
Not to appear so suddenly."

"This is my garden, child,
Which my enemies make grow."

"Oh, have you enemies, old man?"

"Many, but all harmless."

"Would any fight you, old man?"

"Doctors fight me when they can,
But their fight is hopeless
And nothing can they save."

"And enemies make your garden grow?
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George Hanat

SPIRITUI SANCTI

Only the sound of the priest's heels, for there was no other there, could be heard within the crumbling, old basilica. It was the noon hour, the hot hour, and the church was as deserted as the rest of the town, and so no one need ask, "Why is no one else there?" but rather, "Why is he there himself?"

The priest was pacing back and forth across the transept, reading from a book of poetry. It was the only hour of the day that could possibly be his, for he could surely not be allowed to take time out from his duties to read poetry! And so he read now, while everyone else slept in admission of their conquest by the Italian summer. He read, and he walked on heels that clicked, rhythmically and secretly, under his black cassock.

Out in the street, the whole earth seemed to dance, as the sun drew up still more water from the shrivvled ground. The heat waves made a drunken spectacle of the shabby, stucco houses.

A little girl, a dirty, ragged little girl, was running up a street, up the hill toward the church, running in deadly earnest through the dancing, drab streets. Up the chipped, discoloured marble steps she came, and burst through the open door and into the nave. "Father, Father!" she wailed, quite unmindful of the elderly priest's preoccupation with his book, "Father, come quick! Grandpa's dying!"

Back she led him through the stuffy streets, the priest at as fast a walk as his robes would allow him, looking as little as possible at the squallid surroundings, and the little girl running ahead, then running back to urge him on. As they went on, the neighborhood became, if possible, poorer. The houses grew lower, the streets narrower, and they were littered with a refuse whose pungent smell seemed to keep the very air out of them. Wending through alleys into which no cart could ever squeeze, they came to a miserable little one room house in the district down by the warves, where the fishermen lived.

As the priest entered, many people, the occupants of the house, brushed by him out the door, and when his eyes became adjusted to the light, he found himself alone in a foul smelling little cubicle, alone with an old man, who lay like a mummy on the only bed.

But as the priest came over to the bed, the mummy miraculously opened one eye, and then another, and finally, lifting its whole head off the dirty pillow, it said, "Father, forgive me, for I have sinned!"

"I haven't been to confession for I don't know how many years. When you're young, you don't feel the need of these things. But I'm old now, Father. I'm dying. I was baptised and raised a good Christian. I went to first communion and to mass. Father, don't send me to Hell!"

"What is it that you wish to confess?"

The old man layed his head back against the pillow and began to talk, as if to the ceiling. He told it in a monotone, with no expression in his face, as if he had brooded on it so long that there was no longer any feeling left in the story for him.

"It was long ago, before you ever came to this parish, when I was young. That year, the fish weren't biting. Anyone can tell you they weren't biting. We had caught so little all through May and June that by July we didn't even bother to go out any more. We just hung around the warves and thought about our wives and our starving children. Yes, they were starving! My little ones were too weak to do anything but lie in bed and groan all day, while my wife chased cats and dogs through the streets.

"It was toward the end of July, and things were at their worst. Somebody died every day. We were all standing around looking at the felucca, wishing that we could go out in it, and knowing that there would be no point. It would have been after lunch, if there had been any lunch, and the water was covered with a fog that was slowly coming in to shore. It had been cloudy all day, and just a little wind, so we knew it was going to squall.

"But down on the dock came the crazy Englishman, with two other people. He couldn't see the rain coming. So the three crazy ones got into their boat, made sail, and went off.

"I don't know who got the idea first; I think we all got it about the same time. We were a wild bunch, and we all thought that the crazy Englishman had lots of money on board, lots of gold that would buy food for our poor families. We all got into the felucca and sailed off after the Englishman.

"I don't think we knew what we were going to do. It all happened so fast that we didn't have time to make plans. We just thought of him with all that gold, and our families starving.

"He was in the fog before our felucca got away from the warf, but we knew we had a faster boat than he did, and we knew where he was going. So we just set the sails and pulled on the oars as hard as we could, heading for where he disappeared into the fog.

"It was maybe half an hour, and the squall coming up fast, when there was a little break in the fog and we saw them ahead of us. There was a boy at the tiller, and he waved to us, but the others didn't see us coming up because they were both reading. They disappeared in it again, but we kept on going, and in a couple of minutes there was another break and we were right on top of them. The boy shouted something at us in English, but we kept right on going. One of the men was standing up on deck, looking at us curiously, but the other one was still reading his book. Then the boy screamed, and the other man finally folded his book back and put it in his pocket, as if someone had just called him for dinner. Then he stood up and looked at us, just for a moment.

as he, just for a moment.

He just called him for dinner. Then he stood up and looked folded his book back and put it in his pocket, as if someone at us curiously, but the other one was still reading his on going. One of the men was standing up on deck, looking boy shouted something at us in English, but we kept right was another break and we were right on top of them. The because they were both reading. They disappeared in it he waved to us, but the others didn't see us coming up up fast, when there was a little break in the fog and we he disappeared into the fog.

It was maybe half an hour, and the ship's coming pulled on the cable as hard as we could, heading for where we knew where he was going. So we just sat the helix and the work, but we knew we had a faster boat than he did, and starving. He was in the fog before our helixes got away from

We just thought of him with all that gold, and our families all happened so fast that we didn't have time to make plans. "I don't think we knew what we were going to do. It

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off. three crazy ones got into their boats, made sail, and went two other people. He couldn't see the rain coming. So the wind, so we knew it was going to rain.

"But down on the deck came the crazy Englishmen, with in to shore. It had been cloudy all day, and just a little and the water was covered with a fog that was already coming would have been after lunch, if there had been any lunch, out in it, and knowing that there would be no point. It around looking at the helixes, wishing that we could go their worst. Somebody died every day. We were all standing

"It was toward the end of July, and things were at while my wife chased cats and dogs through the streets. too weak to do anything but lie in bed and listen all day, children. Yes, they were starving. My little ones were the waves and thought about our wives and our starving didn't even bother to go out any more. We just hung around caught no little all through May and June that by July we biting. Anyone can tell you that weren't biting. We had barley, when I was young. That year, the ship wouldn't

it was long ago, before you ever came to this left in the story for him. proceeded on it so long that there was no longer any feeling

monotony, with no expression in his face, as if he had and began to talk, as if to the ceiling. He told it to a The old man layed his head back against the pillow

"It is that look that I can't forget. It was the look of the crazy Englishman. He had long, light brown hair that had a wave in it and seemed to float back over his head. He was tall and thin, and he had long arms and sharp features, like a hawk. When he looked at us, he didn't look suprised or afraid. He looked as if he could see right through us, right into our souls.

"Then we hit them, right in the stern where the name of the boat was painted, and the crazy Englishman was thrown off the boat into the water. But before we could board her, the squall closed in, and all we could do was sit there and ride it out. When it stopped, the fog moved off, and we could see that we were a couple of miles out in the bay, but there wasn't anything else around us."

There was a long silence, and then the priest got up from the edge of the bed. "Father, forgive me! Forgive me!" cried the old man, raising his head once again from the pillow. The priest went to the door, and looked blankly out at the blank wall opposite him. How hot the sun was. How drab the street was. How futile life.....but no. He turned and came back into the room.

"Ego te absolvo," said the priest, making the sign of the cross, "in nomine Patris," but he was not thinking of the dying old man who lay on the dirty bed before him, "et Filii," but rather about the man with the wavy hair who died so long ago in the Gulf, the crazy Englishman, "et Spiritui Sancti....", and the old priest forgot his grey hair ---- forgot his black cassock, and clenched his fist til the knuckles showed white.

Tom Jones

A prude from the college at Chester
Fell faint when a freshman carester;
Her reviving was sad--
She went stark raving mad
When she saw that the Knave had undrester.

George Hanst

George Harnet

When she saw that the knave had understood,
She went stark raving mad
Not reviving was sad--

Pell faint when a freshman caretaker
A grade from the college at Chester

Tom Jones

Just all the knowledge showed white.

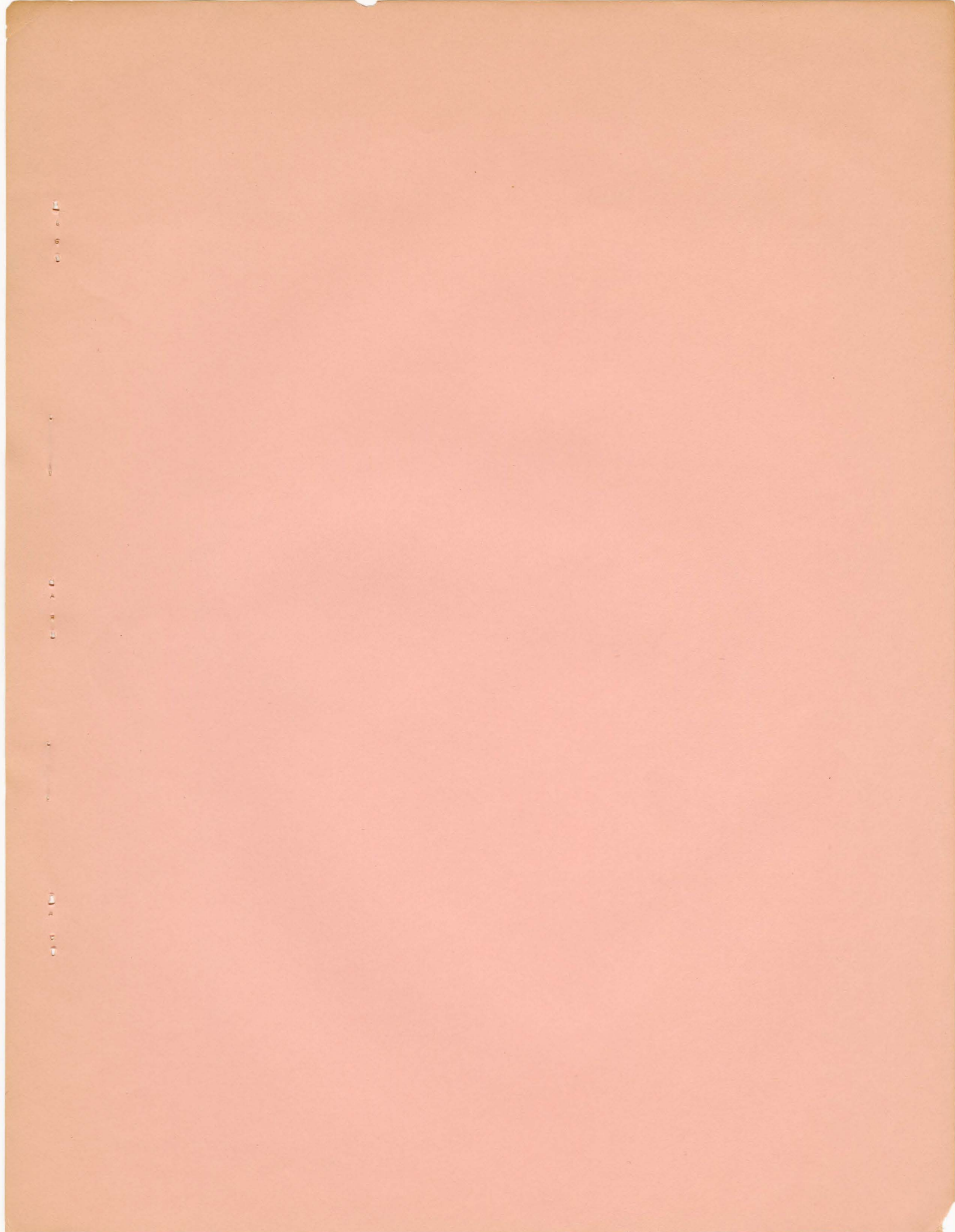
Grey hair --- forgot his black essence, and clenched his
set Goldilocks Gannett... and the old priest forgot his
who died so long ago in the cell, the crazy Englishman,
"et plura," but rather about the man with the wavy hair,
of the dying old man who lay on the dirty bed before him,
of the cross, "in nomine Petri," but he was not catching
"ego te absolvo," said the priest, making the sign
He turned and came back into the room.

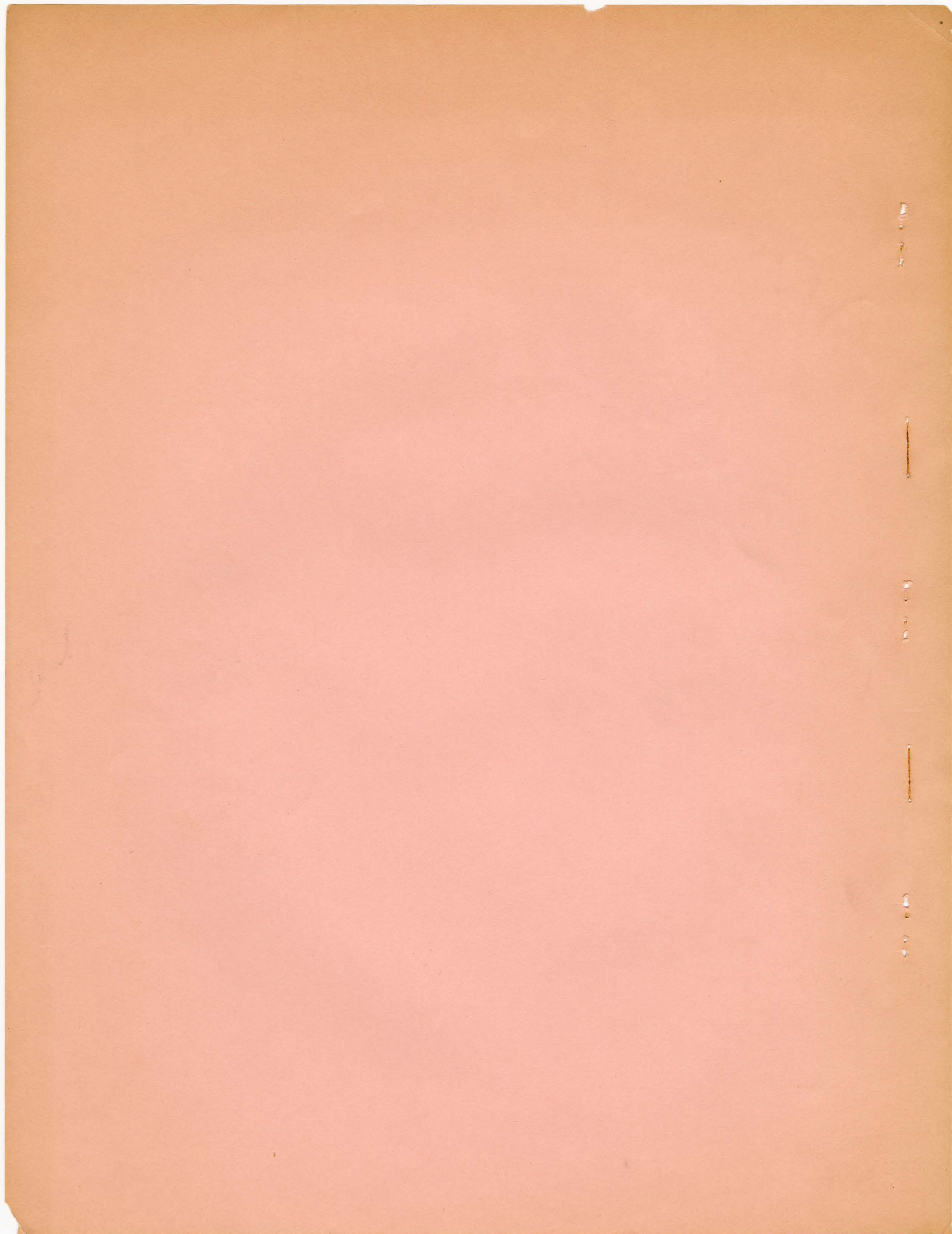
How deep the street was. How full the life.....but no.
out at the plank wall opposite him. How hot the sun was.
blow. The priest went to the door, and looked plainly
melt, curled the old man, retaining his head once again from the
up from the edge of the bed. "Father, forgive me, forgive
There was a long silence, and then the priest got
but there wasn't anything else around us."

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ride it out. When it stopped, the fog moved off, and we
the small closed in, and all we could do was sit there and
off the boat into the water. But before we could bend her,
of the boat was painted, and the crazy Englishman was thrown
"then we hit them, right in the stern where the same
see right through us, right into our souls."

didn't look surprised or afraid. He looked as if he could
sharp features, like a hawk. When he looked at us, he
his head. He was tall and thin, and he had long arms and
hair that had a wave in it and seemed to float back over
look of the crazy Englishman. He had long, light brown

"It is that look that I can't forget. It was the





THE MOUNT VERNON MISCELLANY

SPRING, 1957

25¢ PER COPY

The Mount Vernon Miscellany is published twice annually by the Mount Vernon Literary Society of Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland.

TOM JONES, President

BOBBA NORTON, Secretary

GEORGE DARLEY, Vice-President

PETE RIECKS, Treasurer

A daring young miser named Ben
Once strolled through an opium den.
 His soul was subverted.
 But doom was averted
When the owner demanded five yen.

Louise Jones

LAMENT FOR PHILOSOPHERS

The drawn out battle that he must fight,
Requires that he must use all of his might,
For the odds are great
That it'll be his fate
That no one will believe that he is right.

The Philosopher enters into his dungeon black,
From whence he can proceed to attack
The beliefs of Man
As best he can
So Man can escape God's own rack.

Ethics, Logic, Metaphysics and all the rest,
Are sciences seldom put to the test.
They're often forgotten
Along with the lot on
Which other branches used as the breast.

Lester

EDITORIAL

This, the spring issue of the Miscellany, contains predominantly short stories. The fall issue was predominantly poetry. The editors make it a policy to accept the best material, regardless of genre. For this issue, we have rejected many manuscripts (some of them by the editors themselves) which have substantial merit. This we have done on the basis of our own tastes, which are primarily aesthetic, as opposed to philosophic.

As for the contests, it must be emphasized that this magazine does not necessarily contain all of the contest entries, and that the material herein was not necessarily submitted to the contest.

We would like to thank Dr. Gerda Blumenthal, Mr. Robert Forney, and Dr. Margaret Newlin for judging both contests.



THE SHORT STORY PRIZE WINNER:

SO WE BEAT ON

When the time came for me to find a way to earn a living, I did not, like too many of my college classmates, wait around to see what corporation would care to take me on. I had very specific ideas of what I wanted in this world, and was not willing to leave their fulfilment to chance. And so I contacted an employment agency in New York, told them that I wished to work for an insurance company, that I would have no location but New England, and that I was willing to do some traveling in order to be satisfied with my future employer. With the usual enthusiasm of such organizations, they booked me for an impossible number of appointments, and in the spring of my senior year, I put my best clothes in my best suitcase into the most wretched of automobiles and started out for New England.

Fortunately, I do not remember much of the trip. It was a nightmare of shabby rooms and disgusting food; I was on a narrow budget. The car broke down at every turn in the road, and a week of bad food and little sleep put me so on edge that I began to think it a malign spirit, planning to burn up its generator, to drop its hydraulic lines, to blow three of its four tires. I could not say what companies I visited; they are largely hidden in the mist of cold, nausea, and anger. For that reason it is all the more remarkable that I should remember Mr. Potter so well. He stands out against the impersonality of the other interviewers and my own real, if petty, misfortunes. I have often tried to analyze the nature of his superiority to other men, the indelible stamp, not of genius, but of something much more significant. It was the stamp of mind, mind working through a complete comprehension of past and present, mind clearly and subtly aware of the thrust and parry of life and of the essential meaningfulness of that experience. For he was the reason I had wanted to go to New England in the first place — not he in his person, but he as a symbol — to go to a place where reason was still preeminent, where environment was not a lake into which the harmless individual dove, but rather a water pipe, controlled by a tap, to be drawn

at will and to be turned off when the glass was full. In New England he could, and I hoped that I could, drink without drowning.

Mr. Potter was the personnel director of one of the Hartford companies, and when I came to see him, I had already had three appointments that day. I did not expect much, for I had been turned down three times already, in each case because they wanted someone with a background in math. I did not mind the rejections, but the impersonality with which it was done was crushing to one who had never held a job before, save that of waiter in a summer hotel. I might have been a cabbage, fingered casually by customers in a supermarket, and thrown back into the bin for some blemish which I could not myself see. The cabbage leaves were becoming raddled from fingering. But Mr. Potter was a different kind of customer.

Of course, the first thing I noticed was that he walked with a cane. It was remarkable in a man of, I should say, forty-five, and from his gait he seemed to have had some kind of paralysis. He limped across the anteroom toward me, extending a large and powerful right hand: "You're Mr. James? Come on in. I'm sorry to have kept you waiting."

In the office, he bade me sit down in the usual chair of such offices, just off to one side, and then went around the desk himself. Getting down into his chair was an operation: the cane had to be leaned against the wall and a few precarious steps taken without it before he could sink down and swivel around toward me. As soon as this was done, he picked up his bad leg with his hands and slung it over the chair arm — not without self-consciousness, for who could fail to be aware of the inherent awkwardness of such a situation — but with a simple acceptance of the situation, and a determination not to let it interfere with the more important business at hand. He said, "Well; so you've decided to go to work for an insurance company."

It was an unusual opening. At my other interviews, I had learned to expect a much more roundabout manner (perhaps a discussion of the weather), as if the pawns had to be moved out first. When presented with the queen on the opening move, a play contrary to all the rules of the game, I could not immediately think of a satisfactory reply, and so was forced to be honest from the very start. I said, "Not exactly. That is, I don't want to sell insurance, or write policies, or anything like that. I'd like to work in the main office, doingsomething." I finished vaguely.

"Any math?"

"Well, no. I....." How could I say it?

"I'm afraid we aren't interested in starting anyone in an executive capacity who hasn't had a background in math."

That was it. In two minutes the interview was at an end, I thought. Could it be that I had traveled so far, just to be turned down by a man who was asserting himself at my expense to compensate for his bad leg? In another minute he would hoist his leg down again, stand up, and say, "Thank you so much for coming." Here was a man who had interested me from the moment I saw him — a man I had expected to like, turning me down flatter and quicker than any other personnel director I had yet seen.

However, Mr. Potter did not stand up. He leaned back in his chair and

said, "You were sent up to see us by an employment agency, weren't you?"

I said, "Yes," and waited while he loaded his pipe. He did it with infinite care, leaning well back in his chair and watching the progress as if he did not trust his own hands; he watched each flake of tobacco as it went into the pipe bowl, watched his thumb as it tamped it down, watched a few more flakes go in, and then, with exquisite concern, watched the match lick the tobacco and withdraw, lick and withdraw, until the whole top of the pipe glowed red. He inhaled once, and said through the cloud of smoke coming from his mouth and nose, "That's too bad. You see, I told them that the only people we wanted who had no math were salesmen. The agencies do that to you every time. You see, they aren't interested in how much leg work you have to do, so they send you off to every insurance company on the east coast. How many are you seeing on this trip?"

I confessed that I had appointments with seventeen different ones. "Ah, yes, that's it." He puffed away on his pipe. "It's a very difficult thing, getting your first job. The agencies are pretty awful, but there really isn't any other way to go about it."

I was beginning to like the man again. He seemed to show some genuine interest in my plight, and it occurred to me that, even if he couldn't offer me a job, he could perhaps give me a few suggestions as to how I could get one from somebody else. "How did you get your first position?" I asked. "Everyone has to start somewhere."

Before answering, he took the pipe out of his mouth, and I noticed that he wore a wedding ring. "That was back in the depression. I was looking for any kind of thing I could get, selling shoes, or insurance, or soap, or anything. Oh, I had fixed ideas at first about what I wanted to do, and I'll tell you: they did not center around the insurance business. I wanted to handle mortgages in a bank. But after running around a while and being turned down, my standards got lower and lower, until I was glad to get a job as an insurance salesman on a straight commission basis."

"You're suggesting that I settle for something I don't want and wouldn't be happy doing?"

"That isn't the point. The point is that in the end most jobs have about the same satisfactions. Whatever you do, you will do it in such a way that it will essentially be yours, unless you have no strong, individual mark. And in that case, you wouldn't care to leave one. In the end, I can find reason to be glad that I'm working for an insurance company, and some day you may be glad to be working for a bank."

I listened, fascinated. It had never occurred to me before that such an important thing as your occupation didn't really matter. However, it was all fine theory, but a bit up in the air. What I needed was a job, and so I said, "But I still don't see how I go about getting a job. If you can't hire me because I haven't got any math, a bank will have some other reason, and so will a manu-

facturer, and so on."

He sucked in on his pipe again: "I wouldn't worry about that if I were you. In the depression, they were really looking for some reason to turn you down, any reason at all. But I'm doing better now than lots of people who wouldn't hire me in 1935." He puffed again. "You just have to put up with the agencies. They'll send you on one wild chase after another, but in the end you find something because you just stumble into it, in spite of their efforts. Where do you go from here?"

I could see that the interview was coming to a close, for he was hoisting his leg down from the arm of the chair; I said I was due to talk with Providence Life the next day.

He brightened on hearing the words, and said, "Oh, that's where I had my first job. When you're there, you may meet a man named Walters. He's the head of the sales force, the man I worked for. I don't see him as often as I'd like. Hardly at all, in fact, except at the convention in Boston every year. We always have lunch together then. But if you see him," he picked up his cane and came around the desk to shake hands with me, "send him my regards. You can't miss him: he has a withered arm."

And I turned and left Mr. Potter's office. But I knew that my moment, too, would come.

Tom Jones



THE LOVE-SEED

A seed can't grow, a plant won't bloom
Nor will the strongest tree bear fruit
Without the sun to warm the ground
And rain to wet the root.

Within a hard and twisted shell
A germ may dorm a thousand years,
But when at last the earth is right
The pummel of life appears.

Thus love may lie within the heart
Of those who merely hope and wait;
They die without and form a pod
And leave their destiny to fate.

For love needs warmth and nourishment
To burst through thicknesses of gloom:—
If Understanding eyes would call
My aching heart would surely bloom!

John Kruse

THE THINKER

Will I ever be cured? It doesn't seem as if I ever will. I'm about reconciled to my fate. It's been so long. I thought people had it tough when they lost a limb. What a joke. I'd give anything just to be able to see; or to twitch a muscle; or to smell a rose.

Here I lie. I guess I'm lying down, but I really don't know. I don't even know what happened. A runaway auto may have hit me; possibly I suffered a stroke. If only I could communicate with someone. Grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence. Wouldn't do much good. Never could explain myself well anyhow. I wonder if Man in the future will be like this: just a brain mounted in helpless flesh. I guess that'll take a long, long time . . . time . . . time . . . one thing I've plenty of. Let's see . . . it must be . . . July 1958 as near as I can figure . . . that is if everytime I've gone to sleep and then awakened day has passed. Is it accurate? Probably . . . close as I'll ever have to worry about anyway. One year, six months and twenty-five days. Five hundred and sixty-five days.

The Frenchman who said, "I think, therefore I am," might have enjoyed this situation. I'm thinking, but what am I? What good am I? I've probably exhausted our savings. I hope Lois doesn't have to work to support me. Why can't I die? Where there's life there's hope. When I was twelve I wanted a new bicycle. Why did I recall that again. I've already thought about everything I could think of. Hah! Wonderful statement . . . never was much on sentence construction or vocabulary. I haven't really had to worry about writing since I graduated from college. Maybe I should have . . . always did have good ideas. Man is an insignificant little worm on this globe.

Another morning. Morning for me any way . . . could be anytime, day or night. Five hundred sixty-six. Five hundred sixty-six. Good old five hundred sixty-six. Guess I'll start the day the usual way: recalling all I ever knew or heard about my relatives. Knew just about everything about all of them . . . which isn't much. My friends next . . . not too many of them. We were close, Pete and I. Sam! Sam! SAM!!! A new one!! I bet I haven't thought of Sam in . . . almost five years. Wonder how he is . . . didn't know him too well . . . he is another one for the list. Must be my lucky day . . . haven't added anyone new to the list in . . . 133 days . . . 133, my post office box number one year at college. Wish I could go out drinking with some of the old college gang. Used to do a lot of thinking in those days: nothing to what I do now. She was a wonderful wife. Do they know I'm thinking? Maybe they've got a mach' attached to me that can measure brain waves. What I need is a mind reader . . . guess every man could use one of 'em to make himself known . . . particularly apropos in my case. Back to the daily drill, Philosophic theories . . . can't think of anything new to add . . . still believe reality is in the mind . . . never change that belief. Mathematics . . . shame I never took any math . . . certainly have the time to practice mental discipline. History: Sumerians, Akkads, Hittites . . . dozens of tribes . . . then the Greeks, "the grandeur that was Greece and the glory that was Rome," or is it the other way around? "Know thyself" that was Socrates . . . few people are ever as introspective as . . .

I - I - I can see! I can see! Is this my imagination? I'm in a hospital room
. . . but there are Christmas decorations. That's impossible in July.

"Help! Help!" A nurse came into the sterile room and . . .

"Nurse," he shouted. "What happened to me? Why am I here? What day is it?"

"Calm down, Mr. Allison, you'll be all right. You were hit on the head by a baseball four days ago and have been paralyzed since. I'll fetch a doctor and phone your wife."

"Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!" His eyes rolled wildly and his whole body shook convulsively. "Ha! Ha! Ha! Four days! Four days!"

These two words are the only ones anyone ever heard Peter Allison speak from that day until his death thirty-two years later.

Lester



THE POETRY PRIZE WINNER:

POLARITY

. . . in nature, nothing can be
given;
all things are sold.

— Emerson

As the bee in his bright hiving
hordes the fragile flower's mead
and the sparrow's fatal diving
forms a feather-bed for seed,

So the golden lion sparkles
on the jackal's ruby nose
and the jackal's winey carcass
wanders through the wavering rose.

As the rose's rainbow coating
softly rubs the meandering bee,
so the leagues of bee-blood floating
in the sparrow's scraggly knee

Leap to fire in the tree-sap,
flow through red-fruit on the bole:
as Man drinks the wine for mishap,
so with mud he buys his soul.

James P. Mousley

Each night in rout gives way about
The first white Christ of dawn;
But, like a glance, the mystic trance
Transfixes, and is gone

Tom Jones



MEANING OF BEHOLD

The cold ghosts of the ocean
pop in and out on the flat black

or galleons make tracks
across the proud and only moon

as if this being, peeking
from a great lean of tree-shape

on the lighted rim of the round town
upon a sea-cliff, were a sprig

of wing-wash from a swift
foam-splitting ship

ripped from the white-gold whirligig
of the world's spring-mouth.

James P. Mousley

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OYSTER

Some years ago as I passed along one of life's many travels, I came across to what I thought an interesting old house, set far in on an untrodden trail. Although the house was considerably venerable, I found a singular beauty in its dateless structure. So singular that it almost escapes description. Since time was of no concern, I ventured my way along the place where once I imagined there had been a path and through the undergrowth so that I might have a nearer observation.

The house was not especially pleasing in its physical appearance. I say physical because after my experience there, I discovered that the house did not stand as a material object alone but as something intangible representing mankind's successes and failures of life.

I shall not attempt to describe the exterior because the inside is of more importance. The interior consisted of only one room. Some rooms had been destroyed by the crush of gigantic fallen trees; some demolished through normal deterioration; and others too insecure to permit exploration. This lone room was extremely large and probably once served as the main parlor. The windows were broken and the walls bleak. In one corner was an old-fashioned stove and near it a crumpled pile of rotten wood. In the opposite corner were several chairs and a cot. One of the chairs caught my eye immediately. It was Victorian in style and must have been the prize of the household in its day. I moved about and stumbled on another piece of furniture. It was an over-turned desk. For some mysterious reason, I moved the desk and found beneath it various books and papers.

Although many of the papers were discolored, I was still able to read most of them. As I recall, I remember how I laughed aloud the first time that I read their contents. It was not a jovial laugh; but one filled with mystery, uttered only as a means of emotional relief. It was evident that I did not comprehend their true value and the circumstances under which they were written. After a second reading, I assembled my thoughts and tried to understand the meaning of these personal documents. Gradually I took the statements seriously as authentic experiences of life. I suddenly felt very depressed. The demands of our civilization! Are its goals unconquerable to the average man? The more I thought, the more my ideas conflicted with one another. I was at a loss.

I left the house. Through the years I have seen and recalled that singular beauty of the house and the possible meaning of those papers in the many situations which the individual confronts in life. It is now that I leave you these mysterious papers for your own consideration and evaluation.

My final conclusion, at least the one I am always ultimately reduced to return to, was that someone, just as I, had visited this delapidated residence and found the remains of a man. Feeling that it was the only human thing for him to do, the visitor took it upon himself to dispose of the remains and left his own note of the account. With man was buried his only achievement and possession of his lifetime: a pearl.

(continued)

What is it that makes
a Christian?
To sing Lo How a
 Rose, did you
know that Joshua fit
the Battle with his
 . . . wife, until death
do us —
 parts his hair on
the —
 right now I hear
she—
 Sleep, Baby
 Jesus Christ!

M. D. Gates

When reproached for performing a booboo,
I replied, "It's no worse than what you do;
 For, no matter what name,
 It's the same sort of game,
When you do the booboo you too do."

Tom Jones

ON DR. REICHARD'S DOG

A strange young dog of uncanny knack
Barks at people whose skins are black:
 He is socially conscious;
 How terribly monstrous,
When he knows not the hue of **his** back.

George Boys

There was a young man from Capri
Who, when asked why he preferred liquor to tea,
 He seriously said
 As he rolled out of bed
I dislike to take tea and still see.

M. D. Gates

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FRIEND

THE MOUNT VERNON MISCELLANY

SPRING, 1958

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A SERF DYING FOR HIS MASTER

Five days of the week,
Fifty-two weeks of the year,
The wage slave goes out to seek
His goal. He never comes near
The golden pot at the rainbow's end,
The reward he has been led
To believe in. He follows the trend,
But he never will get ahead.
The great American dream:
Junior in college, daughter well married,
Mother with her clubs. The stream
Of possibilities is often varied
Except for Dad. He tries and tries
Until the bills are paid and then he dies.

DICK LESTER

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able to embarrass her, for Claire was certainly capable of doing that. When we ate without the presence of guests, Claire would speak strange words or incoherent phrases. We soon came to find that she had become addicted to liquor, and we accepted this in much the same way as we did her other eccentricities; we tolerated them if they did not become excessive and thus draw the attention of neighbors.

Her drinking, however, became a source of irritation. She talked about the unhappy past, of her husband who grew to disregard her for other women, of her loneliness and anxiety, and of the final stroke. Then she ran to lock the door of her room, and uttering long cries that seemed to tear her throat, and coughed and became unconscious. Mother pounded on the door, terror-stricken.

"Claire, Claire Claaaaire."

But Claire was sitting at her desk, unable to hear a sound over the extended, yet nervous, sobs.

When Claire came downstairs the next morning, nothing was mentioned, as if nothing had happened. I could not look my aunt in the face, and at times such as these she was exceedingly sweet, being instinctively conscious of my fright. I thought that my parents had not realized what had occurred, so I whispered to my mother that Aunt Claire had been crying, and in return received a harsh and, at the time, incomprehensible "hush".

An incident of most unhappy circumstances caused Claire to leave our home. One evening, she came down for supper in what was clearly a state of tension. She did not remain in one spot, but wandered up and down the room in an erratic pattern, tugging at the shawl draped over her shoulders or abruptly pulling the strands of loose hair into a bun at the back of her neck. At the table she began to scream, yelling out the name "Arthur" with an anger of which I thought her incapable, and her head shook so violently that I expected her to faint at any moment. She picked up a knife and threatened to kill herself; her eyes were intently fixed on the knife, which, seemed to hold some sort of special fascination for her. Now crying, now laughing, she struggled to free herself from the firm hold my father had taken on her frail shoulders. The neighbors had crowded into the doorway, attracted by the hoarse and painful cries. An hour later, Claire was taken from a corner, where she sat whimpering, to a car that was waiting outside to take her to a sanatorium. That was the last time I saw Claire.

* * *

As I sat next to mother, shaking the hands of those who had come to offer condolences, I tried to imagine the scene of the suicide as the telegram had coldly told it.

"SISTER JUMPED 14 FLOORS STOP SYMPATHISE WITH FAMILY STOP STATE HOSPITAL ARRANGED FUNERAL IF WISH STOP"

An open window, a pavement below, a crushed figure, sirens: I heard and saw all this among the mutterings of "my deepest, sincerely" and the sound of the subdued sipping of tea.

"God was always cruel to my poor sister, Why? Why? my mother asked a friend.

"Be quiet, Marguerite, don't talk like that in front of the boy."

"Why was God so merciless?" mother repeated.

Then she wiped her eyes and asked about the dinner she had missed the other night.

BOB LUBASH

The Society extends its thanks to the judges of the Short Story and Poetry Contest, Dr. David Stevenson, Mr. Robert Bailey and Mr. Robert Forney.

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SILENCE

With hands outstretched toward the sky,
I seek an answer from anywhere.
What truth within the life of men doth lie—
“What truth indeed!” my tortured soul does cry.

But the heavens, to which my hands are raised,
Are silent ever silent,
Silent, as a watchful tongueless slave,
Silent, unmoved, as the waiting grave.

EUGENE A. WAGNER

I squeeze my brain with both hands,
So that it fits neatly behind My glasses.
And every morning, on my chin, I harvest
The whiskers that wild by nature grow.
Guilty, knowing and silent.

I'll take a nosegay to my thoughts
The next time that I call.
But those flowers that were so freshly Cut
Are withered and dead.
I hesitated too long in keeping my date.

AL PETERSON

=====

THE ODYSSEY OF A LONELY HEART

I was the kind that always carried my heart in my hands. I would walk up to someone and say, "You have beautiful eyes; would you like to have my heart? I would like you to have it." She would smile a beautiful smile and say, "No thank you, it's too messy." So I carried it further until I saw someone who had a wonderful laugh. "Your laughter is wonderful," I said, "would you take my heart?" "Oh, thank you," she answered with her wonderful laugh, "but your heart is much too heavy." Then I went a little further with it until I came to someone who was crying. "Would you like to have my heart?" I asked her. "If it will make you happy I would gladly give it to you." Then I gave her my heart.

"Now I feel much better, thank you," she said, "but I don't need this any longer." And with that she let it drop to the ground. I was afraid my heart was broken. It lay there very still. I picked it up and wiped the dirt from it. It was badly jarred and for a long time it did not make a sound but gradually it began to beat again, very feebly, at first.

After that I kept it covered and carefully protected. People would ask me, "What are you carrying, little Atlas, the world on your shoulders?" and then they would laugh and sneer at my efforts. My heart was very heavy. I could not understand what they had done with theirs.

Once I met a man on the road driving a cart that was filled with hearts. There was a crowd of followers walking behind him. Each time the cart went over a bump I shuddered to think of those poor hearts, and I could see by the muffled cries and pitiful expressions that it was painful for those walking behind. But the driver was gay and he said to me, "Throw your heart in the wagon with the rest. That way your hands will be free and it will be easier going." I was tempted to do that but my heart seemed too precious to throw into a common lot. "My heart is special", I said, "and it needs special care. Besides, how can I be sure that you are a trustworthy driver?" I left them at a fork in the road.

Often I saw some single travelers who seemed to be carrying a heavy load also. "Are you carrying your heart in your hands?" I asked them. They had them covered and hidden, as I did my own. "Yes", they said. "May I see it?" I asked. Sometimes they would show me their hearts. "It is just like mine", I thought.

Along the road I travelled sat an old sage. "What wisdom have you old sage," I asked, "that will make my heart lighter to bear?" "Your heart is more valuable than you," he answered, "and the blood it pumps is more valuable than it, for all blood is The Blood and all blood is one." With that he said no more.

And as I went along my way I often saw bleeding men and I stopped to save their blood as if it were my blood, and I realized the truth the old sage had spoken. Children's blood and mothers' blood and my blood — all the same. And when my heart pumped, and the blood from their hearts went through my heart and from mine through theirs, it became lighter. The same blood flowed through the grass and the trees, and the clouds were full of the same blood. And my heart seemed lighter with this, and seemed to beat more strongly, and I no longer carried it in my hands but let it carry me in its blood.

JOHN KRUSE

=====

I saw a flower stand
Deserted, covered with snow.
What glorious weeds have adorned
Those shelves.
Now only icy whiteness
Stuffed with enormous emptiness,
Cold
And quiet.
But written on winter that sits
Where pots have been
Is a promise.
Smile
And laugh.

AL PETERSON

POETRY CONTEST WINNER:
DELUGE

Swift and cool runs the silver thread of sanity
O'er the black rocks of mind.
Sing to me, thou spring of life!
Let the rocks glisten with thy song!
And pulling, tugging on the boulders round thy fountain-head
May I unleash the one that lock thy well-spring,
Sending a deluge o'er the bed-rock
Until the stream fills the gorge deep —
Leaving a clear shimmer
To cover now bare stone.

JOHN KRUSE

ALMOST

The sun over head and the wind around
frame a sight of an almost found.
Feeling the heat on face, tramping turf
beneath clumsy steps, I stretch a bit.
A worm leaves his passage in the dirt
to stare stigmatized at a few who grasp their worth.

From soft lip to waiting air the smoke curls
With eager swirls and fingers lies on the world.
Rubbing a downy growth on chin and cheek—
grown old and harsh, I want the dead and jazz
To throw diaper and powder behind the set
and quick'ning, plunge like Dante to an adult net.

The ice in a tumbler melts and waters
I court and love someone's ugly daughter.
Dancing to music raw and sick, feeling the drum
pounce with negro heat thru false spring
I've lost the young and wander naked in sleep
to find the average life of a froshy creep.

Budding glands unfold to heave a grenade of life
and dash their lotion on the unshaven spring's strife.
To leave my shell like hair springing from a smooth
teen leg, I age and lose the single joy
of being uncomplicated and erring boy
To emerge, poly-parted dead, and almost man.

SANDY SANDISON

=====

DEATH

Do not be deceived:
You say, "Death is but a silent sleep."
Have you not seen its raging
Through pain-filled skeletons of feeble Man,
Through the jelly-pounded flesh of fighters
ground under wheels of tanks,
In frightened Man clinging to a thread of Life,
afraid of Night,
In empty isolation of lonely hearts?
You say, "Death is but a silent sleep."
Yes, a silent sleep filled with dirt,
blood-crusted dirt, and lonely anguish.
Have you not seen it racking human frames,
Its wailing, its gasping?
Its helpless, hopeless grasping?
Yet, you say, "It is a gentle passing."
God has not willed it so:
"The wages of sin are death."
We have sinned, ev'n heavily transgressed.
This, our punishment, is Death.

FELICIA YODER

TO SEE THE WORLD IN A GRAIN OF DIRT

Take those dirty shoes off in the hall,
Said Mrs. Putzfrau, and sit in that good chair—
You can go in the kitchen
Where I'll give you a glass of milk,
If you don't spill it all over.

If there is one thing I can't stand
It's someone with dirty fingernails.
Little Prudence (we call her Prudy for short)
Was always prim and proper,
Though the nipples on her would-be breasts
Were chafed by her brassiere.

Frank felt very uncomfortable
In strange places, because of the germs.
He breathed carefully, through his nose,
And touched door-knobs disdainfully
In public places.

Be sure and get all the corners,
Mr. Stern said to his helper.
The storm-windows must be shiny,
Like every other house, he thought.
Next Saturday he would start
On the garage, and after that, the cellar.

I don't care what you do, just get rid of those ants,
Said Goldberg to the man from Ajax Exterminating.
How can they come in here?
I've done everything and they're still all over the place—
Are you sure that stuff will get rid of them?

The trouble with them is, they don't keep their places up.
You know yourself how they let themselves go.
They haven't any pride- I'm not against them
But if you've ever had to sit near them on the bus
You know how they smell.
(She shaved under her arms and used Chanel Number Five).

JOHN KRUSE

=====

SHORT STORY CONTEST HONORABLE MENTION:

I

Why must they persecute me? I don't want anything except to be left alone. Well

"Hey! Watch out! You're lucky mister. Another couple of inches and that car would have hit you."

"Thanks. I I ah was thinking about something. Thank you. Thank You."

How can people help but have accidents? Here's a well dressed, intelligent looking guy who's almost in a trance. Well, that's what money does for you. Wonder what he does. Looks worried. Maybe he has business worries. He's gone into the Atomic Energy Building a scientist maybe.

Should be more careful. I won't be coming here often enough to worry about after today. "Six please." Guess they'll still try to talk me out of it. I hope that I don't weaken. Their arguments are so convincing. If only Lois would back me up. She makes things doubly difficult.

"Number six, sir."

". . . . Thank you."

"Good morning, Mrs. Sykes, is Dr. Hastings in yet?"

"Yes, Dr. Martland. He and several other gentlemen are awaiting you. Go right in."

Well, here it is at last. The showdown. I've argued till I've exhausted every possible argument and yet they still won't see it my way.

"We've got to change his mind, gentlemen. It's important to the United States and even to the whole world. Allen is the only one who can solve this problem at this time. Russia may already have solved the radiation riddle. Maybe the Russians haven't. We don't know though so we must strive to find the answer ourselves. Do any of you have any new suggestions as to different approaches which we could use in trying to convince Allen that he is wrong?"

So, thought Jim Wilkins, the old man is passing the buck to us. I thought that Al would be the last one in the world to get such a crazy notion. All these years he has been a devoted scientist interested only in achievement and not remuneration. Although, he probably will earn less as a writer. His decision reflects integrity: a hollow word for a still hollower outmoded ideal.

Sir James Tilghman answered Hastings, who in private was called the old man. Tilghman, who was one of England's top scientists, had persuaded his government to allow him to work with the Americans on the radio-activity problem. He was primarily a scientist but knew enough about economics to realize that England had its back to the wall. A decaying empire has traditionally brought ruin to the mother country. Tilghman, like many other Englishmen, believed that atomic energy would provide the power which would be a panacea for England's many ills. England was clutching at straws and trying to hang on to the coattails of the present world leader. "We have to convince him, sir. We need cheap, safe atomic power and we need it now." Reemphasizing the old man's position won't help. Perhaps that's the initial sign of decline in a society, when the first rate thinkers no longer feel obligated or are motivated to do their utmost to benefit society.

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"Pure! Pure!" raved the good Saint Peter. That man can't be admitted to Heaven. Why Sir, and here he looked the Master in the eye, he he's against all that You stand for. No. No. No. I don't want him."

"I've got his spirit in an anteroom. Are you ready to hear his plea?"

"It won't do any good," said Satan, "but we might as well get this over with and go to lunch."

"Dr. Martland, the court has not been able to come to a decision. We're going to give you a chance to present any additional arguments you may have which would help us to arrive at a just decision. Neither Saint Peter nor Satan seems to want your soul."

"It makes little difference to me where I go," said Martland with a confident grin, "Heaven or Hell, it's all the same to me."

"You don't seem to understand," said the Master, "neither of these gentlemen will have you. I don't know what to do with you."

"Well I'm in the promised land. It's up to you now. For forty years I've heard of the glories of the afterworld. Now I'd like to experience some of them."

"Don't you think that you might belong in Heaven, Dr. Martland?" inquired the smirking Satan.

"Objection, your Honor, my worthy opponent is trying to put words into the witness' mouth."

"Objection sustained. Mr. Satan please refrain from leading the witness' answer."

"As a matter of fact I think I might enjoy Hell more than I would Heaven, Mr. Satan. You don't seem like a bad fellow. That's all I have to say."

"Please return to the anteroom, Dr. Martland," ordered the Master.

"Yes, Sir and thank You for everything."

"What are we going to do with this soul, gentlemen? Heaven seems to be out of the question, but then on the other hand I don't think he would be right for Hell either."

So the trio sat and sat and sat a while longer. Mr. Satan had been glancing at his watch several times in the last half hour. Obviously he wanted to pronounce a decision and adjourn for lunch.

"Ah ha. I've got it! I've got it!" shouted Satan, "we'll send him back to life. He's not officially dead yet and maybe we can come to a more amicable settlement the next time he comes before us."

"Capital idea! Capital!" chortled Saint Peter. "What do You say, Master?"

"It is a solution. Not exactly what I planned but it'll do until he comes up before us again. I'll inform Martland of your decision."

"Dr. Martland, we've decided that you can return to Earth."

"But, Sir, what about my chance to go to Heaven or Hell? Certainly I'm not to be denied the rewards that I've been taught to believe in my whole life. It's just not ethical. I've got my rights! I'll

"Case dismissed."

DICK LESTER

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